

British Council East Asia

Learning Through English: Policies, Challenges and prospects

Insights from East Asia

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Acknowledgement

I should like to begin by offering my grateful thanks to the British Council East Asia for commissioning the study which is published in these pages. As someone with considerable cultural and linguistic interest in East Asia, I was delighted to accept the challenge of leading the study, but at the same time I have to confess to feeling somewhat apprehensive because I had no previous experience of conducting research in this enormous and diverse area.

How fortunate I have been, therefore, to have been so well supported by all the British Council staff with whom I have been in contact, and a special word of thanks must go to Mina Patel who was contracted to manage this project – Mina was not only highly competent throughout but in addition was a model of patience, understanding, support and good will. I know my colleagues in our research group will join me in offering these thanks.

How fortunate indeed I have also been to have had the benefit of four outstanding colleagues as co-authors in our research group, one from each country represented in the four main studies. Theirs was no easy task, but they approached it with a high degree of professionalism, and I have learned so much from working with them.

Finally, on behalf of our research team I should like to offer a sincere word of thanks to the stakeholders who were interviewed in each of the four countries and who willingly made their time and their considerable expertise available to us.

Thank you all very much.

Professor Emeritus Richard Johnstone OBE
Project Director

June, 2010

Foreword

The debate about the importance of English continues and from being the core of conversation in educational circles, the discussion has moved into social, corporate and political circles. In East Asia the debate about learning other subjects through English is going strong and if anything, gathering momentum. Ministries of education are constantly reviewing policy, hoping to find optimal learning opportunities for students to succeed in a world that is becoming increasingly demanding, especially linguistically.

In order to support Ministries of Education in East Asia, the British Council developed the *Access English* Project. The aim is to help decision makers, trainers and teachers have access to the resources, expertise and information they need in order to transform the teaching and learning of English in their contexts.

As part of this project and in response to a growing need British Council East Asia organised an English Bilingual Education (EBE) symposium in Jakarta in June 2009. The aim of the symposium was to provide a platform for discussion and debate on the theme of Bilingual Education; its relevance, benefits and challenges. The event was successful in its aim, the discussion was energised, informative and thought-provoking. One area in which there was general consensus was the need for more research into the policy and planning implications of bilingual approaches. Papers from the symposium were published in *The EBE Symposium Proceedings Jakarta 2009*.

This report is a direct result of the first EBE symposium. Set against global and regional contexts, the individual reports provide detailed insights into the policy, planning and implementation of programmes in four countries which require children to learn through more than one language.

A year on from the symposium the education landscape in the region is quite different. Some countries have decided that bilingual education is not for them, some countries have higher priorities in the education agenda and yet some, are still pursuing it vigorously.

These reports are detailed and insightful providing a rich description of the four contexts and an in-depth analysis of the English programmes within them. They bring an indication of the untold benefits and many challenges of teaching and learning through English and how socially and politically charged this area of education is and will continue to be.

The British Council would like to thank the hard work and commitment of Richard Johnstone and the researchers that worked with him. It was a pleasure for me personally to work with five such wonderfully professional people.

It is hoped that this work will contribute to the on-going discussion about teaching and learning content subjects through English and more widely the importance of English for children and status of English in the region.

Mina Patel

Glossary of terms

In the various texts a number of acronyms are used. The list below explains covers a selection of these.

BE	Bilingual Education
BEP	Bilingual Education Project (in Spain, under aegis of Spanish ministry in collaboration with the British Council)
CBLT	Content-based Language Teaching
CLIL	Content and language Integrated Learning
EBE	English Bilingual Education (meaning Bilingual Education with English as one of the languages) Or Early Bilingual Education
EFL	English as Foreign language
ELT	English language Teaching
IGCSE	International General Certificate of Secondary Education
L1	First language
L2	Second language
ML	Modern Language
TEFL	Teaching English as Foreign Language
TL	Target language
TOEFL	Test of English as Foreign Language

Contents

	Pages
1. Introduction <i>Richard Johnstone</i> Learning through English Cognitive benefits of bi-multilingualism Conditions and consequences Two frameworks Insights from four East Asian countries	7
2. Insights from Indonesia <i>Nilawati Hadisantosa</i> Introduction Education at school in Indonesia at present Bilingual education involving English in Indonesia: past up to present Strengths and weaknesses of bilingual education as implemented at present Conclusions and recommendations	24
3. Insights from South Korea <i>WonKey Lee</i> Public school English education reinforcement policy (PSEERP) Korean government's document for English language policy: the Accredited Teacher scheme Research studies Interviews with key stakeholders Conclusions	47
4. Insights from Thailand <i>Sonthida Keyuravong</i> English language curriculum Policy documents Research into bilingual education in Thailand Current policy and priorities for education at school	69

Bilingual education implemented at present
Bilingual education: possible future directions

5. **Insights from Vietnam** **96**
To Thi Thu Huong
Historical, cultural and sociolinguistic context
State of the English language in Vietnam
English language teaching & learning in Vietnam
Available publications on bilingual education in Vietnam
Interviews with key stakeholders
Conclusions
6. **Synthesis & Implications** **115**
Richard Johnstone
Some additional East Asian Research
Societal impact of English
Majority/minority issues
Curriculum & pedagogy.
Factors which emerge
Policies, Challenges and Prospects

Learning through English: Chapter 1

INTRODUCTION

Richard Johnstone

This introductory chapter explains the choice of title: 'Learning through English'. Before focusing specifically on East Asia, it presents a small number of findings from international research on the cognitive benefits of bi- or multilingualism and on important conditions for achieving these benefits through education in an additional language at school. It draws attention to the often less than favourable contexts in which attempts to implement education through an additional language take place. It briefly discusses what might be meant by bi- or multi-literacy in the modern electronic age and also whether literacy in a child's first language must necessarily precede literacy in their second language. It presents two frameworks which might help in understanding policy and practice in respect of 'learning through English' at school: one consisting of eight different models of languages education, and the other consisting of three sets of factors (societal, provision and process) in relation to outcomes. It then describes the aims, plans, methodology and implementation of the present project in East Asia which was commissioned by the British Council East Asia Network.

Learning through English, and EBE

In considering the most appropriate title for our publication, we eventually settled on the term 'Learning through English'. We considered using the term 'bilingual education' but this gave three small problems:

- First, 'bilingual' means 'two languages', but in fact many learners in East Asia already have a home language which is neither of the two languages occurring in their so-called 'bilingual education' at school (which probably consists of their national language + English). Therefore, in their case they in fact have three or more languages available to them and so the term 'bilingual education' can be misleading.
- Second, the term 'bilingual education' has many different meanings and the scene is inhabited by a plethora of other terms too, e.g. 'immersion', 'bilingual education', CLIL or CBLT and many others. Often, their meanings and demarcations in respect of each other are not clear or universally shared, which adds to the confusion surrounding this area.

- Third, in one of the four countries which participated in our project, namely South Korea, the term 'bilingual education' could not really apply to the very interesting national project which was taking place.

Our chosen title of 'Learning through English' has the advantage that it leaves open the number of other languages which any given learner may possess. It applies well across all four countries participating in our main study, and at the same time it puts the spotlight on the specific language in question, namely English as global language which offers particular opportunities but also poses undeniable threats – and a discussion of both the opportunities and the threats will feature in our overall text.

By 'Learning through English' we mean more than 'learning the English language', important though this particular aim may be. We mean gaining knowledge, learning subject matter, acquiring skills, forming attitudes, developing oneself in ways that are not purely linguistic. This additional learning may take place within the school subject called English (as in the South Korean project) or it may take place elsewhere in subject areas additional to English as subject. It is not assumed, however, that most East Asian learners' learning will be exclusively conducted through the medium of English, since a central place has to be found for their first and/or national language in their education and personal development.

Although the term 'Learning through English' is the title of our text, this does not mean that we avoid using the plethora of other terms which are widely used. Our approach on this is quite pragmatic. If a particular project on which we report calls itself CLIL, or CBLT or Bilingual Education (BE), or English Bilingual Education (EBE), those are the terms which we will use. Also, if we are referring to research on bi- or multilingual education more generally, i.e. setting out general findings and not focusing specifically on particular languages, then in such cases we use such terms as seem most appropriate.

EBE

We should draw particular attention to the acronym EBE which can sometimes mean Early Bilingual Education. In the present text, however, EBE stands for English Bilingual Education and has been used as such in various parts of East Asia, including within British Council networks. In this sense, EBE is really a form of shorthand for 'Bilingual Education, with English as one of the two languages, the other being likely to be the national language of the particular country concerned'.

A varied picture

The international research on immersion and bilingual education presents a varied picture. There have been many undoubted successes, some of which will be briefly described as we proceed, but at the same time things can go badly wrong, and there have been causes for concern, including in some

East Asian contexts where in places bilingual education has been abandoned or has regressed somewhat in favour of a return to teaching mainly in the mother tongue or national language.

An important purpose of the present publication therefore is to gain insights into East Asian experiences of ‘Learning through English’, and we bear three perspectives particularly in mind:

- **Policies** which particular governments have put in place
- **Challenges** which need to be confronted, if widespread success is to be achieved; and
- **Prospects** for the future.

One of the most important challenges for policy-makers is to ensure that success is not limited to a small number of elite, privileged schools but is extended far beyond this, in principle to all students, regardless of socio-economic status, gender, geographical location, first language (whether minority or majority), ethnicity and religion.

Although there is a very good case for East Asian students to learn English, and indeed to engage in ‘learning through English’, we are not claiming that any strong form of immersion education is essential. There are a number of different models of Language Education, including immersion education which is at the strong end of the spectrum. Later in this chapter, some of these models are set out. The choice of model depends on values, aims and also on what is feasible, and there is no single model which is always the best.

In addition, we are not claiming that governments, regions or institutions should necessarily rush forward at great speed in order to implement ‘Learning through English’ policies. Doing so can cause problems. What counts is a good and sustainable forward plan, allied to a realistic timescale by which the plan can be achieved, however long or short that timescale may be.

A small number of research findings from outside East Asia will now be briefly discussed. This is not done in order to establish a western framework for use in evaluating East Asian policy and practice. The intention rather is to help judgements to be formed on the extent to which policy and practice in East Asia are on the whole similar to or different from what obtains elsewhere.

Cognitive benefits of bi- or multilingualism, and some challenges to meet

The web-site of the American Speech-Language-Hearing Association offers a brief overview of the advantages of having more than one language: *‘Most children have the capacity to learn two or more languages. Research suggests there are advantages to being bilingual, such as linguistic and metalinguistic abilities and cognitive flexibility, such as, concept formation, divergent thinking and general reasoning and verbal abilities’* (ASLHA web-site).

Indeed, a number of research studies suggest strongly that there can be advantages to individuals who become bilingual, whether naturally through family and local community or through receiving a bilingual education. A small number of recent studies will be discussed.

Metalinguistic awareness and self-regulation

Ransdell, Barbier & Nut (2006) compared bilingual and monolingual college students from the USA, France and Estonia. The particular focus was their reading comprehension as gauged by a self-assessment questionnaire and a reading test. They found that bilingual students were superior to the monolingual group, particularly in developing an underlying metalinguistic awareness of their language skills in reading. Although the researchers were properly cautious about using their findings to justify a causal relationship (e.g. bilingualism causes better reading), they did not consider it unreasonable to infer that bilingualism helps develop an underlying metalinguistic awareness which in turn is of benefit to an individual's processes of cognitive regulation and self-control. They claim that a significant implication of their study is that bilingualism seems to benefit not only children but older learners also.

Enhancement of executive control processes when young; and slowing decline in older age

The above study seems very much in line with a major paper by Bialystok (2007) of the cognitive benefits of bilingualism. She claims that bilinguals must have developed mechanisms for controlling the ways in which they attend to their two or more language systems. Without this, their two or more languages would interfere with each other and impede fluency in whichever language they were trying to operate at any given time. On this argument, becoming bilingual enhances what she calls 'executive control processes' when children are young. Moreover, it continues to confer major advantages of cognitive control among bilingual adults; and she claims that it slows down the decline of these processes in learners of older age. Some clarification is provided as to what in fact these executive/cognitive processes are which bilingualism seems to facilitate. They include:

- control of attention
- facilitation of planning and categorisation
- inhibition of inappropriate responding.

Bialystok claims that these processes are believed to be located in the frontal cortex of the brain, an area which is the last to develop in childhood. Being stimulated to become bilingual in childhood helps this area to develop more quickly than otherwise. In addition, the benefits appear to influence older age too, in that this frontal cortex area is stated to be among the first to decline with older age, and being actively bilingual helps to slow this down. Therefore, as with Ransdell and colleagues (above), bilingualism seems to confer benefits across the age range.

Spatial ability, mental imagery and bilingual language-processing

It is not too difficult to accept that bilingualism can confer benefits in respect of language-related skills such as reading comprehension, as in Randell et al (2006, above). An interesting feature of the research by McLeay (2003) is that it explores the possible benefits of bilingualism in a field that on

the face of it does not appear strongly connected to language, namely ‘spatial tasks’. In this study the subjects were Welsh-English balanced bilinguals in comparison with English-speaking monolinguals. The tasks were designed to challenge their abilities in making sense of diagrams consisting of pairs of like or unlike knotted and unknotted rope-shapes. The bilinguals performed the tasks more quickly and were better able to deal with complex tasks. McLeay takes this to imply a cognitive relationship between spatial ability, mental imagery and bilingual language processing ability. She surmises that bilingualism helps individuals in analyzing situations, in holding and controlling information in their short-term memory, while scanning for helpful relationships and then re-structuring their thoughts.

Conditions and Consequences

In the present publication we are concerned with bilingualism as developed through education at school, and certain caveats need to be mentioned.

Interdependence and Threshold

Much depends on the level of bilingualism which is attained. It is not assumed that learners need to attain a fully balanced status in which the two languages are roughly equal in capacity, but it does assume that a certain level in the second language does need to be attained, if the cognitive benefits in education are to be forthcoming. This view is in line with the ‘Threshold’ and the ‘Developmental Interdependence’ hypotheses (Cummins, 1979). The ‘Threshold’ hypothesis states that *‘there may be threshold levels of linguistic competence which a bilingual child must attain both in order to avoid cognitive disadvantages and allow the potentially beneficial aspects of bilingualism to influence his cognitive and academic functioning’* (p222), while the ‘Developmental Interdependence Hypothesis’ states that *‘the development of competence in a second language (L2) is partially a function of the type of competence already developed in L1 at the time when intensive exposure to the L2 begins’* (p222).

Two major consequences arise from the above:

- First, the importance of a learner’s first language, regardless of whether this happens to be the national language of a country or a second or minority language. If this first language is ignored, or worse still, belittled and kept deliberately out of a child’s education, then difficulties may well arise. This point might prove particularly salient in some if not all East Asian countries where, as has already been stated, many children have a home language which is not the national language of the country nor English.
- Second, it is important to reach some sort of ‘breakthrough’ level in the additional language, e.g. English as L2, if this is to become a vehicle for performing complex, cognitively demanding tasks. This has implications for the nature and duration of courses and also for the levels of competence which teachers will require. If teachers lack

confidence + range, fluency and accuracy in their medium of instruction, then it is difficult to see how they can be expected to be successful with their students, so there are major implications for national policy-makers in this regard. It is not a good idea to go for a major expansion of bilingual education without a good and sustainable strategy for teacher training and continuing professional development.

What are the key conditions for successful bilingual/multilingual development in individuals?

So, there is much to commend bi- multilingualism, but what might be done in schools to develop it? An authoritative perspective on this question is provided by Cummins (2001) whose paper refers to school contexts in which two or more languages are being used in order to teach subject content. He argues that among the key conditions which desirably should be fulfilled are:

- Helping learners to comprehend input, and in particular to make meaning from it
- Encouraging them to read extensively in the target language in a widening range of genres
- Helping them to focus explicitly on features of the target language itself, to become aware of cross-linguistic relationships and to develop an awareness of how power and language intersect in human discourse
- Encouraging them to make extensive actual use of the target language, since this helps to consolidate the code and enables learners to express their willingness and their identity in increasingly powerful ways through use of the language.

Underlying these conditions is a progression which successful bilingual education learners make, beginning with comprehensible intake and leading eventually to what Cummins terms 'critical literacy' which enables them, for example, to understand texts (spoken, written or visual) in terms of their hidden or implicit or potential meanings and the power relationships which underlie them.

In the four main studies of our present text, and in the Conclusions of the final chapter, we shall re-visit in greater detail this notion of identifying and meeting key conditions for success.

What may be expected of those who teach in bilingual education programmes, especially when circumstances are not too favourable?

Benson (2004) argues that primary school bilingual education teaching is a challenging job in any country, even when circumstances are favourable, and she goes on to claim that it is particularly challenging in developing countries. Her own empirical studies were based in Bolivia and Mozambique.

Among the realities which teachers of this sort had to contend were:

- They were often untrained and unpaid
- They taught in under-resourced schools with students who might be under-nourished

- They were expected to help their young pupils acquire literacy in the mother tongue (or national language) and also in the target language
- They needed to work out how to teach essential subject-matter in both.

Benson argues, moreover, that teachers of this sort need to be as bilingual and bi-literate as possible, that one of their main challenges is to help 'bridge the linguistic and cultural gap between home and school' and also to become respected members of the local community.

She argues that in training courses for bilingual education teachers in these circumstances it may be unrealistic to make exclusive use of the target language, and that the first or national language may appropriately be used at times to complement the target language in order to help teach pedagogical vocabulary and ensure proper concept development.

Overall, she sees five key roles for the primary school bilingual education teacher:

- Pedagogue
- Linguist
- Intercultural communicator
- Community member, and
- Advocate.

The latter role of advocate is important in that the teacher may have to address genuine misunderstandings and anxieties on the part of parents or possibly have to contend with views expressed through the media which are politically, ideologically or socially biased. In doing so, they may be challenged to position themselves outside of a colonial frame of reference, a point which goes well with Cummins (2001, above) notion of critical literacy and the need to examine relationships between power and language.

Multiple literacy

In past centuries many of those who had a fluent command of two, three or even more languages (or, dialects, or 'voices') were largely illiterate in the sense of having difficulty in reading and writing texts printed on paper.

By contrast, the bi- or multilingualism which the modern world requires through education at school requires not only an oral-aural proficiency in two or more languages, but also bi- or multi-literacy involving the new technologies. Computers and the internet have created many new types of everyday language-use involving reading and writing, often in combination with static and moving visuals and sounds of many different sorts.

Literacy is therefore not just the capacity to read traditionally printed text and write letters, essays and articles on paper by hand or machine. It is now much more multi-faceted and has become a major core skill in instant communication within networks stretching across the world.

It is also important to note an additional dimension to literacy, even where the new technologies may not be much in evidence. Minority communities in rural or remote areas may even today in some cases seem lacking in traditional literacy based on printed text but may in fact have highly developed skills in making sense of and using a wide range of visual and auditory symbols within their particular communities and environment, and in this sense may possess a remarkable symbolic visual/auditory literacy, an insight which features strongly in the excellent study by Tupas (2008) which is referred to in Chapter 6. If members of such minority communities as these are to become more included in education, then the inclusion should apply not just to them as names in a class-list but also to the capacities which they bring with them.

When we think of multiple literacy, it is also useful to bear in mind the notion of 'critical literacy' as discussed by Cummins (above). If learners at school are to make sense of, thrive in and contribute positively to the complex and highly diverse modern world, then their bi- or multilingual education will need to equip them to do much more than understand the universal, propositional meaning of words. They will also need to go more deeply into words, phrases, texts and discourses in order to make sense of meanings which are not necessarily explicit, objective and universal but which may be any of implicit, subjective, personal, cultural, political or other.

Which literacy first?

Is it essential that literacy should be developed first in a child's first language, before it can be developed in their second and subsequent languages? In many bilingual programmes, this is what happens, and with good reason, but does it have to happen in this way? My own experience in Scotland suggests that literacy in first language need not necessarily always precede literacy in an additional language.

In our national research on the attainments of pupils receiving Gaelic-medium primary school education in Scotland (Johnstone et al, 1999), my colleagues and I learned that the great majority of children receiving Gaelic-medium education from age 5 onwards were from English-speaking homes, so their education was based on Gaelic-L2 immersion (mostly 'early total immersion'), rather than on 'Gaelic-L1 maintenance'. In fact, the pupils were taught to read and write in Gaelic before they were taught to read and write in English. As they proceeded through their primary school education, English was gradually fed in, and this included being taught to read and write in English. Although the balance between Gaelic and English varied from one school to another, in many cases it would be roughly 75% Gaelic and 25% English for the pupils' primary school education overall, with the teaching of literacy in Gaelic-as-L2 generally preceding the teaching of literacy in English-as-L1. In the final year of their primary school education, the Gaelic-medium pupils took the same standardised national assessments for English as were taken by pupils educated through English in a large national

sample of schools. Despite English being chronologically the Gaelic-medium pupils second literacy and also despite some 75% of their overall primary school curriculum being in Gaelic, the performance of the Gaelic-medium pupils in written English was clearly superior to that of pupils who had been educated from the start almost entirely through the medium of English, both in English-medium classes within the same schools and also across the much larger national sample.

However, great care should be taken with the automatic application of formulae such as ‘L1 literacy should precede L2 literacy’ or ‘L2 literacy can successfully precede L1 literacy’. What is vitally important is what people actually do within these formulaic abstractions. In fact, in the case of the children receiving Gaelic-medium education, there were two additional factors relating to ‘what people actually do’ which undoubtedly contributed to the successful outcome.

- First, the English-speaking children had been put into Gaelic-medium primary education by their English-speaking parents (all of the primary schools, by the way, were ordinary state schools, and none of them were fee-paying or socio-economically privileged). Many parents undoubtedly supported their children’s literacy in English informally through the home, and so the children’s bi-literacy was initially developed in two separate settings – the home for one language and the school for the other.
- Second, in most cases when children were introduced to literacy in English at primary school, following their initial development of literacy in Gaelic, it was the children’s class-teacher who had responsibility for both languages. Thus, the class-teacher could construct a language development strategy which linked the two languages, allowing literacy in English to build on aspects first established in class through Gaelic. This happy arrangement is very different from schools which I have visited in certain other countries where one teacher is responsible for L1 and another for L2, and they have little or no communication with each other.

Beyond an instrumental outlook

The studies briefly discussed above represent only a minute fraction of what is available in the international research on bi- and multilingualism. They have been included because it has been my strong impression that by far the dominant justification for ‘learning through English’ in East Asia has been the **instrumental justification**, namely that in the global world this helps individuals with their further study, their career, their work, their leisure and it helps businesses expand, diversify, collaborate and compete locally, nationally and internationally.

Important though an instrumental outlook undoubtedly is, it would not do justice to the notion of multilingualism or multilingual education to leave it at that. What impresses me about the research studies briefly discussed above is their strongly **educational justification**. It is essentially concerned with the empowerment of individuals and the development of their autonomy, while at the same time equipping them with social, linguistic and cognitive skills that will be practically useful in their subsequent education and career.

Making sense of policy-related initiatives

Two frameworks are now offered which may prove helpful in making sense of policy-related initiatives:

- Framework 1** consists of eight different models of Language(s) Education at school. It should be emphasized that these eight models are abstractions, and that the situation on the ground is much more complex and confused, but nonetheless from both a research and a policy perspective I have often found it useful when evaluating a particular policy-related programme to try to situate the programme in relation to the framework of models, because this helps me to understand what is involved in the programme and what might be expected of it.
- Framework 2** consists of three different sets of factors: societal, provision and process factors. From a research and a policy perspective, one may ask what the relationship of these factors (both individually and in combination) might be to a programme's outcomes.

Framework 1: Models of Language(s) Education at School

There are many different forms of Languages Education 'on the ground' across the world, but most of them probably fit more or less well with one or other of the following more abstract models as set out below:

Framework 1: Possible Models of Language Education at school (TL = Target Language)

1.	TL as subject	Only a few minutes per day, teaching a course based on a pre-set progression of units, sometimes based on a course-book. Variable starting points – often at age 8-10 but once established across a country for these age-groups, may be progressively extended downwards over a period of time to ages 7-5.
2.	TL as subject (embedded)	As for 1. above, but more flexible and responsive, in that the teacher periodically embeds the ML in the teaching of other subject matter, e.g. primary school science, geography, and/or exploits current events as they occur
3.	Language Awareness	One target language is not taught. Instead, students are introduced to a range of languages, including those minority languages used in their own society, in order to develop a broader awareness of language, as a precursor to learning one particular language.
4.	Subject +	As for 1. above, but with more time per day, maybe 30-45 minutes. Sometimes called 'low immersion'
5.	Extended	As for 1. above but with 1 or 2 subjects, in part at least, taught through the TL, possibly from Grade 4 onwards, hence more time

- and intensity than for 4. above
6. Intensive
As for 1. above but with one or more 'intensive' time-slots fitted in, e.g. for several weeks during school (in which the TL is used for up to 70% of curricular time), or in additional time at weekends or during vacations, then reversal to Subject model
 7. Immersion (partial)
Children learn part of their curriculum, usually for a minimum of 40% of curricular time, through the medium of the TL. May be early partial, delayed partial or late partial; may be one-way or two-way.
 8. Immersion (total)
Children learn all or most of their curriculum through the medium of the ML. may be early total, delayed total or late total.

I have already mentioned that a plethora of terms is currently in use and that as a consequence the Languages Education scene is quite confused. Let me give one example of this confusion. The term CLIL has become widely used in Europe and its use has extended further afield also, including to some extent in East Asia. As for myself, I never use the term CLIL unless it is strictly necessary to do so.

One reason I do not like to use it is that the term is meaningless. It stands for Content and Language Integrated Learning, which sounds impressive until one asks oneself if there is any type of learning which does not involve the integration of language and content? So, in that sense CLIL means everything and therefore nothing.

Another reason for not favouring use of the term CLIL is that it is used by some to cover all of what in the scheme of models above would be Models 4-8 inclusive. That is, it is used as an umbrella term which among other things envisions immersion as a sub-set of CLIL. To my mind, it is not helpful to use CLIL in this way, and if I use the term CLIL at all, I prefer to limit its use to Model 5 in the framework given above.

Quite properly, however, some of my colleagues in reporting their particular studies have used the term CLIL and other terms besides. This is reasonable, because if a particular project has been labelled as CLIL by those undertaking it, then that is how it should appear in the reported text. In my concluding chapter, however I will come back to these eight models and stay with the terminology which they contain.

Framework 2: Provisional list of Factors and Outcomes in education through an additional language

This Framework will be exemplified in respect of one particular bilingual education project: the national **Bilingual Education Project (BEP) in Spain** which is implemented under the aegis of the Spanish Ministry of Education in collaboration with the British Council.

Four key features of the project should be mentioned:

- The BEP takes place in a large number of primary and secondary schools drawn from several of Spain's autonomous regions. Its key aim is to bring bilingual education (Spanish-English) to children in ordinary state schools, so there is no involvement of fee-paying or private education.
- The project begins with children at age 3, though there are other possible starting points to accommodate children who move with their family into the school's area.
- There is a strong 'whole-school' policy. Both the Ministry and the British Council did not wish to see parallel streams in any of the participating primary schools (i.e. one bilingual education stream and one monolingual Spanish-language stream running throughout the period of primary school education). They did not wish these parallel streams because they considered that quite soon the Spanish-language stream would be disproportionately populated by children from less privileged socio-economic or other backgrounds. By insisting on their 'whole school' BEP policy, they were making bilingual education accessible to all children, regardless of their background.
- A fourth key feature was the formal agreement with the local associated secondary schools that when pupils had completed their BEP at primary school, the secondary school would continue to provide a bilingual education for them, up to age 16.

With regard to ultimate examination outcomes, at the present time of writing, the first two cohorts which began at age 3 have reached age 16 and taken the International GCSE examinations, with the second cohort showing increased numbers and also higher levels of performance.

Framework 2 below incorporates the above key features and adds a number of others. It should be stated that inevitably not all of the evaluation findings were positive, though the general picture was undoubtedly positive. The purpose of Framework 2 is to identify those factors which seemed associated with the generally positive outcomes.

Framework 2: A selection of Factors and Outcomes as evidenced in the national BEP (Spain)

- Societal factors**
- Strong political will to substantially increase the accessibility of bilingual education for children of all backgrounds
 - Strong parental interest and involvement in enabling their children to prepare for global citizenship through Spanish-English bilingual education
- Provision factors**
- An early start (from age 3 onwards)
 - Substantial amount of time per week for learning through English as L2: approximately 40%
 - Whole-school policy, thereby avoiding emergence of monolingual sink-group
 - Formal agreement with local secondary schools that they will continue the BEP up to age 16

- Strong leadership and support from specialist staff in both the Ministry and British Council
- Development of a special BEP curriculum, conceived with collaboration of participating teachers, and endorsed by national authority, rather than asking schools to follow the conventional Spanish curriculum but in two languages.
- Provision of supernumerary teachers, fluent in English, who work with mainstream class-teachers
- Highly reputable international IGCSE examination at which ultimately to aim, lending international credibility to what has been achieved
- Provision of independent external evaluation to identify problems as well as successes.

Process factors (teaching)

- Use by teachers of a wide range of general teaching strategies (which the independent evaluation documents)
- Use by teachers of a range of language-focused teaching strategies, covering grammar, vocabulary and the discourses of different school subjects (also documented by the independent evaluation)
- Early introduction of reading and writing in both Spanish and English
- Creation of a collaborative community atmosphere in class
- Activities which offer students a cognitive challenge and which help them integrate their knowledge across different subject areas
- Use of assessment, not to permanently classify students, but to support their learning
- Management approach based on consultation and collaboration with colleagues

Outcomes

- Over Cohorts 1 and 2, increasing participation and success in prestigious international examination (IGCSE)
- Most students have developed confidence and an outward-looking approach, without feeling that their Spanish identity or Spanish language proficiency have been compromised.

Having overall responsibility for the independent evaluation of the BEP¹ (as mentioned in the list of Provision factors above), I make no claim that all of these factors were strongly present in each and every participating school, but it is fair to claim that they were generally representative. Nor is it claimed that these were the only factors. There undoubtedly were others, including a large group of individual and small-group factors which are not discussed here.

Nor is it claimed that the above list of factors represents a model to be copied and implemented in other countries and contexts. Any attempt to do so would be likely to encounter major difficulties, because countries and contexts differ from each other in many significant ways.

¹ The work of the independent evaluation has been completed, but at the time of writing (June 2010), the full report has not been published and so it would be wrong in the present publication to reveal the findings in detail, thereby pre-empting the full report. However, a preliminary account of the findings can already be found on the web-site of the British Council (Spain), and the full report will be published there also in September 2010.

However, there may well be specific elements which other countries might wish to borrow or adapt in order to develop their own policies and practices, and the basic general framework of societal factors, provision factors, process factors and outcomes may be useful when officials in other countries seek to develop, implement and evaluate their own languages education policies.

Insights from four East Asian countries

Chapters 2-5 discuss in turn: Indonesia, South Korea, Thailand and Vietnam. Chapter 6 draws briefly on a wider range of research from other East Asian countries.

The term 'insights' has been carefully chosen. Chapters 2-4 are not intended to provide a comprehensive or official overview of each country in turn. Rather, they are written in order to offer insights, provided in each case by a distinguished academic professional from the particular country, in consultation with a small number of key stakeholders.

Each chapter has been designed to offer insight into:

- The social, cultural and socio-linguistic background to the particular country
- The emergence of English as major language
- Past and present policies and practices for teaching English and for teaching through English
- Difficulties, challenges, solutions, successes and prospects

Participating countries

Data for the study were collected in the four aforementioned countries, where it was believed that there is a particular interest among Ministries in developing appropriate forms of 'Learning through English'. Although data were not collected directly from Japan, Malaysia, Philippines, Singapore and Taiwan, the report arising from the present study will be made available to these countries and, should they so choose, their participation in subsequent developments will be welcomed.

Data-collection

Data were collected in two ways:

- Review of published research articles and policy documents for each country involved and from the international field more generally.
- Interviews with key stakeholders in the field for each country.

Research Group

Data-collection and -analysis were undertaken by one experienced and expert university researcher from each of the four countries listed above, mainly in the period January to April 2010. They four experts were identified and appointed by the British Council East Asia Network and attended a Research Framework Meeting in Manila on Tuesday 1st and Wednesday 2nd December, 2009, along with myself as Project Director. At this meeting, procedures for collecting and analyzing data were discussed and agreed.

Research and Policy documents

The British Council had already identified some research articles and policy documents which might be relevant to the study, and these were made available in advance of the December meeting, but in addition the Research Group used their own knowledge, experience and contacts in order to add to this list.

Key stakeholders

It was assumed that a small number of key stakeholders might be interviewed, unlikely to exceed ten in number. Since the emphasis was on policy and planning, they would be drawn from Ministries (if willing to participate), regional authorities, national organizations representing school staff, Teacher Education, Research and if possible parents.

Language of the interviews

It was agreed that the interviews should be conducted in an appropriate and agreed national language of each country, rather than in English. This would be likely to put the interviewees more at their ease and allow them to access their deepest thoughts. However, if a particular interviewee was keen to be interviewed in English, there would be no objection to this.

Role of the Research Group in relation to the British Council

The British Council East Asia Network had commissioned the present study. They were keen that the research undertaken should be independent. In order to achieve this independence, the Research Group, when conducting the stakeholder interviews, did not present themselves as acting on behalf of the British Council, nor was it their task to promote any policies or priorities the British Council might have.

At the same time, the research team was aware that doing this research might conceivably become a rather lonely and possibly stressful activity, given the policy sensitivities which might possibly exist,

and so it was essential that the relationship of the Research Group to the British Council should be as friendly and collaborative as possible. The British Council Network was keen to provide the Research Group with as much encouragement and support as possible, consistent with their independent conduct of the research. Any member of the Research Group was accordingly encouraged to feel free to contact Mina Patel (who was administering the present project on behalf of the British Council), if they encountered any contextual issues that seem to be causing concern. Mina and the British Council Network would do as much as possible to help.

Ethical considerations in respect of the key stakeholder interviews

In the interviews it was important that the interviewees should feel as relaxed as possible, so that they would open up and express their deepest thoughts without fear that the evidence would in any way be held against them. That was one of the reasons why audio-recording of the interviews was not favoured, though it was not ruled out if the researcher and interviewee both felt it would be a useful thing to do. The researcher would inform each interviewee that they were there simply to benefit from the interviewee's views and experiences and were not there in order to make any judgments about what was said.

The following Principles governed the Research Group's approach:

- **Principle of Interviewee Anonymity**
The views expressed in the interviews would be portrayed anonymously. That is, steps would be taken to ensure that no views would in any way be attributed to named persons, whether in speech, or in report writing or in any other system of communication.
- **Principle of Researcher Impartiality**
The Researcher was not there to promote or otherwise LTE; nor was the Researcher there in order to promote or otherwise any other initiatives which the British Council or any other body might have in mind. The Researcher was there for one simple purpose: to learn more from respected professionals in the field.
- **Principle of Confidentiality**
The Study would deal with matters that are potentially sensitive and of national interest, so it was vital that no information was prematurely or inadvertently leaked out into the system. This meant that members of the Research Group would divulge no findings from the Study to any person or group outside the Research Group, until the Study as a whole had been reported to the British Council East Asia Network and had been published.
- **Principle of Data Security**
Members of the Research group would ensure that all data were securely protected and stored and made available solely to members of the Research Group.

Framework 1 (Eight models of Languages Education) and **Framework 2** (Factors and Outcomes) as discussed in the preceding section may be worth bearing in mind as readers proceed through Chapters 2-6 which follow.

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BIODATA

Professor Emeritus Richard Johnstone OBE was for many years Head of Education at the University of Stirling, Scotland, and Director of the government-funded Scottish Centre for Information on Language Teaching & Research. Since 1991 he has written the Annual Review of Research for the Cambridge University Press, covering the international research on the teaching and learning of additional languages. He has directed a large number of research projects featuring a range of languages: in particular French, German, Italian, Spanish, Gaelic and English. Following his retirement from full-time employment in 2007, he has remained active in the field. In addition to directing the present East Asia study, he has directed the evaluation of the national Bilingual Education Project in Spain (for the Spanish Ministry of Education and the British Council) and Early Bilingual Education Feasibility Studies Feasibility Studies in Italy and Portugal. Also since retirement, he has given plenary talks in India, China, Japan, South Korea, Taiwan, Canada, Spain, Italy, Slovenia and Hungary. He is also currently Senior Research Director of the national research capacity-building initiative in Scotland designed to support the maintenance and revitalisation of Gaelic language and culture.



Learning through English: Chapter 2

Insights from INDONESIA

Nilawati Hadisantosa

Introduction

The present paper is divided into three parts: first, education at school in Indonesia at present which deals with national policy priorities, policy decisions and forms of provision for the teaching of English; second, bilingual education involving English in the past up to the present time, and third, possibilities for English Bilingual Education (EBE) in the future.

The data have been collected in two ways: first, review of published research articles and policy documents; second, interview with key stakeholders.

The British Council in Jakarta has provided a number of policy documents which have been helpful. However, it is difficult to find published research articles in Indonesia except for some unpublished research, some papers presented at the Eighth International Conference, ITB Bandung, and research conducted by the Ministry of National Education (MoNE). Based on curiosity, the writer tried to find articles about EBE in Indonesian newspapers and it turned out that it was mostly discussed in the English newspaper *The Jakarta Post*. For the meetings with key stakeholders, the writer interviewed two senior officials at the MoNE, three head teachers, one primary school English teacher trainer who is also the founder of ETN - the Jakarta Primary School English Teachers' Network, and one class teacher.

Indonesia is an archipelagic country which encompasses an estimated 17,508 islands, only 6,000 of which are inhabited. Indonesia's 238 million people make it the world's fourth-most populous state. The official language is Indonesian language or *bahasa Indonesia* which is used in administrative offices, schools, science, and mass-media (Alwi, 2000). Indonesia has 726 local languages, second ranked as language diversity laboratory in the world after Papua New Guinea which has 867 languages (SIL, 2001). There are at least 13 large-scale local languages with at least one million speakers. In addition to that, there are hundreds of local languages with less than one million speakers which with the advent of globalization can become potentially endangered or even extinct.

Education at School in Indonesia at present

This section deals with the national policy priorities based on the Strategic Plan 2005 – 2009 and the Strategic Plan 2010 – 2014, where the policy decisions are taken, how important it is for students at school to develop a good command of English, and the policies and forms of provision for the teaching of English which are currently in place.

The current national policy priorities and developments for education at school

The main policies on national education development in the Strategic Plan, Ministry of National Education of the Republic of Indonesia 2005-2009, were the improvement of capacity and modernization. This includes (a) equity and expansion of access to education; (b) quality, relevance and competitiveness; (c) governance, accountability, and public image. The strategic policy for equity and expansion of education would be carried out through the strengthening of some programs, among others: financing of operational costs for 9-year compulsory basic education, the provision of facilities and infrastructure for compulsory basic education, expansion of literacy education for the population aged more than 15 years, expansion of access to early childhood education, and utilizing ICT as a distance learning system.

A situation analysis of the national education shows that the demand for education is still bigger than the supply. If an effective equilibrium between the quantity of citizens and the capacity of the national education can be attained, then an important aim of education for the Indonesian people will be achieved. ICT-based information can also improve the monitoring system of the implementation of education programs (Ministry of National Education).

The period 2010-2014 is focused on service empowerment. In the Regulation of the Ministry of National Education Number 2/2010 on the Strategic Plan of the Ministry of National Education 2010-2014, the policy is directed more towards entrepreneurship by emphasizing the alignment of education to the needs of the business and industrial world.

Where the policy decisions are taken which affect education at school

A high-ranking official at the MoE mentioned that when it comes to strategy policy, the decisions are made by the central government including norms/rules, standardizing national education, setting-up criteria (e.g. in choosing the principals of schools), designing procedures (e.g. teachers' promotion). The tactical operation of policy is generally made regionally. The central government also decides on the criteria for accreditation and the system of monitoring. The regional government is in charge of developing the operational policy. In the era of democracy, the regional governments are given more authority in developing their districts. However, there is no clear line which distinguishes between that which belongs to the authority of the regions and that which belongs to the central government. This is definitely true in the field of education, where the central government is still dominant in terms of policy and budget (the senior official in the

Ministry, interview, February, 2010). In an interview with another official at the Ministry (February, 2010), it was mentioned that the role of the directorate general is highly significant. In every proposal, there is a consultation with the district, and the people have the chance to respond. However, regulation is strict and the districts are not able to initiate any changes of their own.

The importance for students to develop a good command of English

In general it is agreed that it is important for students at school to develop a good command of English. However the degree of importance varies depending on the level of education and also whether the schools are located in the big cities or remote areas where the chances to meet foreigners are scarce. One senior official (interview, February, 2010) stated that for students at high school and university level, it is a must to develop a good command of English. Some universities require their students to reach a certain standard level of TOEFL in order to graduate. For a lower level such as junior high school, however, students should be able to develop a good command of English, but it is not obligatory. The expectation is even lower at the elementary level. A slightly different view is forwarded by another senior official at the Ministry (interview, February, 2010). He stated it is mandatory for students at school to develop a good command of English to be able to take part actively in globalized society. It is one of the required skills needed in the workplace and they have to be able to negotiate with people from other countries. Further, he added that the students in the big cities must have a higher level of competency in English than those in remote areas.

The policies and forms of provision for the teaching of English

As mentioned in Government Regulation No 20/2006, teaching English is directed to develop the four skills: listening, speaking, reading, and writing, so that school graduates are able to communicate and use the discourse at a certain level of literacy. Literacy level is divided into four aspects: *performative*, *functional*, *informational*, and *epistemic*. In the school-based curriculum applied in Indonesian schools, it is expected that primary schools will develop the English competence of their students to prepare them to continue to the higher level. The target of English teaching in junior high schools is that students are able to reach the *functional* level, to be able to communicate in the oral and written form of daily routines. High school students are expected to reach the *informative* level, to have a language competence to access knowledge in order to prepare them to continue their study at university. The *epistemic* level, the ability to express their ideas and knowledge in the target language is considered too high for the high school level to reach since English in Indonesia is taught as a foreign language (TEFL).

The amount of time used in teaching English is set out below:

Table 1: The amount of time used in teaching English at different stages

Stages of School	Students' age	Amount of time
Primary School (six years)	7-12 years old	35 minutes x 2 times per week
Junior High School (3 years)	13-15 years old	40 minutes x 4 times per week
Senior High School (3 years)	16-18 years old	45 minutes x 4 times per week

As the need for English language learning is increasing all the time, the previous curriculum was modified in order to become more suited to students' global needs. Indonesian schools used to be more traditional in teaching English by giving considerable emphasis to grammar. It was common to find Indonesian students who had a high mastery of English grammatical concepts and patterns. At school, they were taught and drilled more on grammatical patterns, but lacked support for speaking and writing. As the need for communication skills is becoming the main focus, the policy is also moving to strengthen these skills, especially with regard to communication. Moving from an audio lingual approach to one based on communication, students are introduced to all four skills of reading, listening, speaking and writing, as well as to grammar.

Unfortunately, the change in the curriculum is not followed by appropriate socialization and teacher training and so, accordingly, the results thus far do not match the expectations. First, teachers are still teaching in the traditional way with the biggest emphasis on the grammar, and if some are already moving towards a new approach, the emphasis on fluency in the beginning is not directly followed by accuracy. Moreover, the change of approach is not followed by the application of suitable assessment. In the national examination, students are only tested on reading for comprehension using multiple-choice types of test with a considerable emphasis on grammar. This shows that improving the quality of teaching, learning and assessment English in Indonesia still has a long way to go.

Bilingual Education involving English in Indonesia: past up to the present

In the Soeharto era (1966-1998), Indonesian nationals were not allowed to attend the international schools operating in the country which were restricted to the children of expatriates (Coleman 2009, p. 17). As a result of economic crises, quite a number of Indonesian students who studied abroad had to return to their homeland. This created a demand for schools which used English as a medium of instruction. The existing international schools at that time were unwilling to open their

doors too widely, giving priority only to an elite group of Indonesian students. To meet the rising demand for some form of education through the medium of English, some expensive private schools were established under foreign franchise systems to cater for the needs of the upper middle classes.

Facing globalization, the Indonesian government is aware of the substantial need for Indonesian citizens to be able to express themselves clearly in the international setting. In 2003 Law No 20 of the National Education System (Republik Indonesia, 2003) relaxed the restriction on international schools and in fact required that central government and/or local governments should establish 'one international standard school' at each educational level (i.e. primary, junior secondary, senior secondary and senior vocational).

In 2004 the government asked Professor Slamet as the Education Governance and Management Specialist in MoNE to prepare a policy on the use of English in science and maths. As part of the research he visited Malaysia to investigate Malaysian experiences of bilingual programmes in the teaching of content subjects. Following his research and policy, 30 junior secondary schools, in a number of provinces, were established as pilot schools (Bax, 2010, p. 7). The aim of the project is to raise standards of education generally through the development of schools of 'international standard' in the face of globalization (Bax, 2010, p. 8; interview with senior respondent, 5 February 2010).

The Ministry of National Education's Strategic Plan 2005-2009 stated:

In order to improve the nation's ability to compete . . . central government and the rural district government (kabupaten) or urban district government (kota) (need to) develop 112 international standard primary, junior secondary, senior secondary and senior vocational schools throughout Indonesia (Translated from Depdiknas, 2005)

In his research report, Clegg (2007) mentions that the Government of Indonesia has taken a decision to establish English-medium education in a limited number of schools known as *SBI* schools. Applications for *SBI* status have been received and some 450 schools across the country have received this designation. These schools started formally to offer the teaching of mathematics and science through the medium of English from July 2008.

Types of Schools

In Indonesia, schools are put into different types of categories: Regular schools, National Standard Schools, International Schools, International Standard School (SBI), and Prospective International Standard Schools (RSBI). Referring to bilingual education in Indonesia the types of schools are the last three: international schools, international standard school (SBI), and Prospective International Standard School (RSBI).

International schools

Law No 20/2003 gives a definition of an international school as ‘an institutional education which is run by the representative of foreign countries in Indonesia, which can use the education rules of the countries mentioned, and which is approved by the Indonesian government.’ The students of this type of school are specifically children of foreigners who live and work in Indonesia. Many international schools, such as the Australian International School (AIS), the Singapore International School (SIS) and the New Zealand International School (NZIS), take their curriculum from their respective national curriculums.

International Standard Schools

Following the Ministry of National Education’s Strategic Plan, in 2007 government guidelines appeared which for the first time defined what is meant by ‘international standard school’ (*Sekolah Bertaraf Internasional* or *SBI*). The definition states that an international standard school or *madrasah* is:

A school . . . which fulfils all the National Standards for Education and

which is further enriched by taking into consideration the education standards of one member nation of the organization for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD) and/or another advanced nation which has particular strengths in education such that it achieves competitive advantage in the international forum (Translated from Depdiknas, 2007).

The same document specifies the role which English is expected to play in International Standard Schools:

1. *English is to be used as the medium of instruction for science, mathematics and core vocational subjects from year 4 of primary school and throughout junior secondary school, senior secondary school and vocational secondary school.*
2. *Teachers must possess the competence required to teach their subjects through English.*
3. *Head teachers must possess active mastery of English (Depdiknas, 2007).*

There are two models in the implementation of international standard school (*SBI*), first, as a new developed school; and second, as an existing developed school. Before a school can be upgraded to an *SBI* level, it has to fulfill all the requirements to be a National Standard School. As stated by Clegg (2007, p. 8) in his research report, applications for *SBI* status have been received and some 450 schools across the country have received this designation. These schools started formally to offer the teaching of Mathematics and Science through the medium of English from July 2008.

Prospective International Standard Schools

Many of the designated schools were not ready to be international standardschools right away, therefore the government gave them more time to prepare and these are known as *RSBI (Rintisan Sekolah Bertaraf Internasional)* or Prospective International Standard Schools. To be appointed as

an RSBI, a school should meet certain criteria, among which is the teaching of at least two subjects in English (Chodidjah, 2009: 88).

In the private schools, there are two types of school, first, National Plus School and second, International School.

National Plus schools

These are private schools which gained wide popularity in Indonesia. With the approval of the Ministry of Education, they have provided a learning environment that meets the international education standards for Indonesian as well as expatriate children (only a very small proportion) and children of mixed Indonesian-expat marriages. Like other private schools in Indonesia, the National Plus schools conform to the same rules: they should be registered and accredited with the Ministry of Education. The National Plus schools usually provide extensive facilities such as sports facilities, computer laboratories with Internet, libraries, music rooms, and drama rooms. The 'plus' in the National Plus is derived from the use of English as a medium of instruction and an international curriculum that is applied separately from or in combination with the Indonesian curriculum.

International schools (private)

The private schools extend themselves more by having International School or classes side by side with National Plus ones. In comparison with the international schools run by the representatives of foreign countries in Indonesia, these schools are run by private institutions, local or foreign ones. The international label refers to the application of a full foreign curriculum and the students are prepared in order to continue their subsequent education abroad.

The National Plus schools are similar to private International Schools in terms of international accreditation, teaching methodologies, and internal policies and procedures, but the international schools are slightly different in terms of school fees and subjects learned. Private International schools are more flexible in applying a progressive curriculum, such as the Cambridge, Victoria Certificate Education (VCE) and International Baccalaureate (IB), while the National Plus schools are required to teach the Indonesian language, religion, and civic studies. Some National Plus schools also prepare their students to sit the National Examinations.

One example of a private international school is *Dyatmika* which is located in Denpasar regency, Bali. The school chose to apply to become an International school while maintaining the national curriculum using 50 percent English and 50 percent Indonesian. Its high school offers the Cambridge examination. This school teaches students to be responsible for the environment and emphasize proficiency in English and Indonesian (*The Jakarta Post*, 2008).

Some Concerns in relation to SBI

First of all, the two definitions of international schools, an institutional education which is run by the representatives of foreign countries in Indonesia and the one which is run by private

institutions, local or foreign institution, has caused public confusion. Recently, the government has asked the private schools to apply for the *RSBI* or *SBI* status as part of their efforts to monitor and evaluate their existence, the implementation of which is still not clear.

Second, there is a misinterpretation of the government guideline in the starting grade for using English as a medium of instruction. The reason for introducing English as a medium of instruction starting from year 4 of primary school as stated in the government guideline is appropriate. This is in line with the view that children should be taught through the medium of their mother tongue, at least in the early years of their education as recommended in the SEAMEO policy (Coleman 2009, pp. 41-42; an interview, 2 February 2010). In reality, English as a medium of instruction has been used from year 1 of primary schools.

Third, Indonesian language or *Bahasa Indonesia* as a national language has been used as a medium of instruction in schools for decades. In the last few years it has drawn a concern among educators following the possibility of local language death. Out of 726 indigenous languages, 10 have vanished. Many linguists predict that in the years to come gradually but definitely the number of our vanishing local languages is likely to rise sharply (Sugiharto, 2008). To add more concern, a third language, English, is used as a medium of instruction. The long term impact of this would be enormous unless the government would consider the SEAMEO recommendation and be strict on the regulation that students learn maths and science through English as a medium of instruction starting only from grade 4. Despite the aforementioned regulation concerning the starting age for English as medium of instruction, schools begin using English as a medium of instruction from grade 1 of primary school.

Fourth, when *Bahasa Indonesia* was the only medium of instruction, schools were required to teach the local language as the local content of the curriculum. But with the emerging and mushrooming demand for English, schools then drop the local language in order to give more time to the English teaching. As a result, in the long run, children and the younger generation can no longer speak the local language. This is culturally and linguistically pitiful. Instead of learning the local language, students learn other languages such as Arabic, Mandarin, French, German, and Japanese.

Fifth, learning a language cannot be separated from learning its culture. However, studying in international standard schools does not mean that students should forget Indonesian culture. The role of a head teacher is important in making a decision on preserving Indonesian culture. As an example, during an observation in a public primary school (*RSBI*) which has developed a collaboration with an Australian school, the head teacher showed how the students preserve the Indonesian culture by learning the local dances and playing musical instruments (*angklung*). During the transition from one subject to another, the students sing national songs to raise their awareness as a citizen of Indonesia with the aid of audio visual media.

On the other hand, it is suggested by a Director of Studies in a private International Standard School (interview, March 2010) that in learning English, students should also learn about the cultures, the people and the places of the English speaking countries. Gaining an understanding of these aspects might well motivate the students to learn more. When students' competency has

reached the intermediate level, they should be encouraged to learn to express their knowledge of their own country, Indonesia, and give a presentation of Indonesian custom and culture, the characteristics of its people from different tribes and places, in English.

Sixth, in the National Plus schools, the subjects in which English is used as a medium of instruction also vary. A National Plus school in North Jakarta used English in teaching not only mathematics and science, but also other subjects such as sports and even Mandarin language (Interview with a class teacher, Jakarta, February, 2010). In the interview, the teacher mentioned that they are also in the process of teaching Indonesian history and civics in English, but apparently the textbooks are not available yet. A clear guideline from the government is needed here concerning the subjects taught in English.

Seventh, a discussion with some educators shows that the mushrooming of *RSBI/SBI* has drawn a concern among them, particularly that *RSBI/SBI* take place in public schools where children obtain an education for free or a small fee. The fact that the fees of these schools now are sometimes higher than private schools raises a question whether the Ministry is committed to the Dakar Convention on Education for All and Convention on the Rights of The Child.

In relation to the International Standard School, the Strategic Plan of 2010-2014 (Ministry of National Education, March 2010) states that the number of International Standard Schools has increased significantly in the previous years as shown in Table 2 below:

Table 2: the Number of International Standard Schools 2004 - 2008

Year \ Level of School	2004	2005	2006	2007	2008
Primary School	--	--	22	141	207
Junior High-School	--	--	34	170	277
Senior High-School	--	--	100	259	259
Vocational School	--	--	140	179	300

The data in Table 2, however, are somewhat outdated since a high official in the Ministry mentioned in a seminar recently (June 2010) that the number of *RSBI* has reached more than one thousand.

However, the Ministry of National Education still puts emphasis on the quantity rather than on the quality of International Standard Schools. It is expected in the strategic target of the government in 2010-2014 that International Standard Schools (*SBI/RSBI*): for primary level will be available in 50%

of districts/cities; for junior high school level will be available in 60% of districts /cities; for senior high school level/ vocational schools will be available in 60% of districts/cities.

In facing the globalization of education, the rapid growth of international schools operated by unqualified foreign institutions has become a problem in 2010-2014. It is recommended by some respondents in the present interview study that MoNE has to be firm with the regulation of establishing a school by foreign institutions.

The Objectives of EBE-type programme

In the Ministry of National Education's Handbook on International Standard Primary Schools (Depdiknas 2008a):

"The aim of international standard primary schools is to improve the professionalism of primary schools as centres of knowledge, skills, experience, attitudes and values based on national standards and an international perspective. . . . Graduates of international standard primary schools are world class, able to compete and to collaborate globally with other nations in this world, and this requires understanding of people and cultures across the world."

In a research study of International Standard Schools (Pusat Penelitian Kebijakan dan Inovasi Pendidikan, 2007), it is mentioned that the program for improving the quality of high schools towards becoming International Standard Schools aims at developing the quality of its graduates and building a globally competent workforce.

According to a senior official in the Ministry (Interview, February, 2010), it is difficult to answer whether the objectives are being met or not. In the official's opinion, the objectives are not clear, and until now the government has not developed comprehensive tools to monitor this. Research should be conducted to find out whether the graduates of the International Standard Schools achieve better grades in the national exam compared to the graduates of mainstream schools.

Monitoring

Recently, the Ministry established Government Regulation No 17/2010 to monitor schools with the international label (Kompas, Detiknews.com). This label is often used as a part of the marketing strategy while the curriculum used in that school is not in accordance with the international standard. If the school has all the requirements of an international standard, then it will be offered SBI certification. Otherwise, if it is not ready, it will be certified as RSBI. This applies to both public and private schools (National Plus schools). The definition of International School will only apply to schools run by the Embassies or Foreign Countries' Representatives to serve their citizens who live in Indonesia and available only to a small number of Indonesian citizens, such as the Singapore International School, the Korean International School, and the British International School.

Coleman (2009, p 18-19) mentions nine criteria by which the quality of International Standard Schools in Indonesia should be judged:

- *Accreditation – ‘A’ level by Indonesian National Accreditation Board and accredited by a school accreditation body in an OECD member nation.*
- *Curriculum – Level of lesson content equivalent to or higher than that taught in an OECD member country*
- *Learning Process – Science, Mathematics and core vocational subjects are taught using English. Other subjects, apart from foreign languages, are taught in Bahasa Indonesia*
- *Evaluation – Achieves Indonesian National Education Standard for Evaluation, enriched with modes of evaluation employed in an OECD member country*
- *Teachers – Teachers of science, mathematics and core vocational subjects are able to deliver lessons through English*
- *Head teacher – Head teacher has an active mastery of English. Head teacher possesses international vision, capable of developing international links*
- *Facilities and Resources – Library equipped with facilities which permit access to ITC – based learning resources throughout the world.*
- *Management – School is multicultural. Has ‘sister school’ links with International Standard Schools abroad.*
- *Financing – Achieves Indonesian National Education Standard for school financing.*

The Association of National Plus Schools (ANPS) has developed a set of seven characteristics to define the expected attributes of member schools (Lubis 2005, The Jakarta Post). These include:

- a. *A set of clear policies that have been developed, documented, published and implemented by the school*
- b. *Knowledge of and respect for Indonesian cultural values, diversity and the natural environments*
- c. *Students are educated in, and can communicate using both Indonesian and English*
- d. *A commitment to plan and implement ongoing staff professional development*
- e. *The development and use of national and international learning outcomes in the curriculum framework*
- f. *Educational programs, teaching methodologies and a range of assessment practices that support student-centered learning*

- g. An appropriate range of resources and facilities are provided to achieve the described learning outcomes*

In comparing the two sets of criteria, *knowledge of and respect for Indonesian cultural values, diversity and the natural environments* was not clearly stated in the nine criteria by which the quality of International Standard Schools in Indonesia should be judged. Without this, there is a danger that the students of RSBI/SBI might lose the national identity as an Indonesian.

Obstacles in the implementation of EBE Programme

The number of prospective international standard schools is growing rapidly, which shows that schools are trying to comply with the government's regulation. However, some obstacles are looming on the horizon which need the attention of the educators and the Ministry of National Education to ensure the success of the implementation of EBE in Indonesia. Human resource is the biggest problem, followed by curriculum, teaching methods, teaching materials, funding, and misconceptions of the stakeholders.

Human resources

The biggest problems in the human resource in the international standard schools are the teachers, both local and foreign.

Local Teachers

Most local teachers are not prepared for teaching their subjects using English as a medium of instruction. The English proficiency of the teachers of maths and science as well as the head teachers is very low. The TOEIC test results of the RSBI shows that 51 % of head teachers are at the novice level and 30.5% are at the elementary level, while more than 40% of the Mathematics and Science teachers are at novice level and around 36% of them are in the elementary level (Depdiknas 2009, pp. 30-33). Interviews and available research studies show that teachers are not confident in teaching maths and science using English. Students are often smarter than the teachers when it comes to English. Teachers have problems with scientific terminology as well as in classroom instruction. They might be good teachers when teaching their subjects in Indonesian, but teaching these same subjects in English is a different matter.

Foreign Teachers

It is not easy to find native English teachers who teach maths and science. Most of the prospective international standard schools do not provide native English teachers. The National Standard Schools, the private ones, employ teachers from the Philippines and India more than teachers from English speaking countries. A number of the native English teachers do not have a degree in education. However, these teachers are still needed and usually they are assigned to teach the skills of listening comprehension and speaking in English, including pronunciation.

Curriculum

There is another area of International Standard School education where careful scrutiny and caution should be exercised. Gower (2002, The Jakarta Post) mentions that the wholesale adoption of foreign curricula from outside of Indonesia is always liable to be dubious in educational terms; not least because, after all, a child in Indonesia is not a child in Singapore or Australia – for whom and where the curricula was designed and targeted. According to the Guidelines for Running a Prospective International Standard School (Depdiknas 2008a, p.24) the international curriculum should reflect the Indonesian curriculum.

Teaching methods

Teachers are used to teach in the way they themselves learnt when they were studying which was teacher-centered. Learning science or other subjects in schools means the teacher just spoon feeds the students with theories and they just have to take notes and memorize them. Teachers are not trained to teach interactively nor lead the students to do critical thinking. In teaching science with English as a medium of instruction, the teachers have to change their paradigm of teaching and this is not an easy and quick process.

Teaching material

According to one of the officials at the Ministry (interview, February, 2010), the teaching material which is written by lecturers at the university is too difficult for students. Imported books are available in some stores in the big cities but teachers just cannot afford them, as well as students in the rural areas.

Funding

The government has allocated a budget for the operational cost of the International Standard Schools. However, this is only temporary and the schools have to raise funds to survive in the long run. As a consequence, the schools charge much higher fees than regular schools.

Misconceptions of stakeholders

There was a lack of clear guidance from the Ministry concerning the International Standard Schools which causes misinterpretation of the regulations as mentioned earlier in this paper. Teachers have no clear idea of how much English should be used in teaching mathematics and science or other subjects. Parents and public in general do not know much about international standard schools, the curriculum they use, the subjects taught, and whether the students are also prepared to sit the national exam.

Teaching methods & materials

Some teachers taught mathematics and science or other subjects through English by translating teaching materials. This information is confirmed by one senior official at the Ministry that schools translate the national curriculum into English. From his class observation in a private primary school, nominated by the government as an international standard school, Coleman (2009, pp 21-22) has illustrated an example of the dangers involved in assuming that subjects can be taught through English simply by translating teaching material. Particularly in primary school we are dealing with the fundamental formation of concepts which is taking place in the minds of children. According to the senior official, methods of teaching are developed by university lecturers using CDs, LCD, animation. The way in which mathematics and science are taught is intended by the government to be closely linked with ICT. Some schools used materials for teaching mathematics and science in English produced by other countries, mostly Singapore and Malaysia. Schools that have made some collaboration with IBO or Cambridge will be supplied with the materials needed.

Budget

International Standard Schools receive a substantial subsidy from central government. A senior official in the Ministry mentioned a budget up to IDR 400 million, but it varies. Coleman (2009, pp. 29-31) reported that an International Standard Primary School in Aceh received a block grant of IDR 500 million from central government in the first year of their participation the scheme and IDR 300 million in the second year. In an interview with the head teacher of an *RSBI* primary school in Jakarta (March 9, 2010), the head teacher mentioned the amount of IDR 1 billion was given to a school in Bangli, Bali. His own school received IDR 500 million in the first year which was used to improve the language computer laboratory, ICT, to renovate the building facilities such as the toilets for the students, musholla, and clinic, to buy books. In the second year, the school received only IDR 100 million. When the researcher asked about the difference between the two amounts, she was informed that it depends on the budget of the government that year for education. Vocational schools received a loan from the Asian Development Bank and World Bank. The subsidy from the central government is intended for operational expenses of *RSBI*, the regional government should find the investment. Different from other public schools, the prospective international standard schools set up a quite high amount of entrance fee. They are also allowed to ask for additional school fees and to find other sources.

Who teaches?

In the state International Standard Schools, almost all of the teachers are local teachers. Native speakers of English teachers might come once or twice a week to teach English to students in the extra-curricular classes. In the public primary school that the writer had a chance to observe, a native speaker of English also teaches the teachers. If the schools employed native speakers of English to teach in the school then these teachers are assigned to teach English as a subject, especially to teach the speaking skill and pronunciation. Some private international schools hire

native speakers of English to teach mathematics, science and other subjects but the number is relatively small compared to the overall number of teachers in a school.

Training for teachers of mathematics and science

Training for teachers of mathematics and science varies in length of time and material from place to place. The Ministry of National Education has organized several training events as well as providing English modules for certain subjects (Nurchahyo, 2010, p. 1). In the interviews with the head teachers, it was stated that teachers of mathematics and science receive training for two weeks, once a year from the Department of National Education. It was also mentioned that there was some kind of training for trainers, but it was not clear whether the transfer of knowledge from these trainers to the teachers was adequate.

Some universities in collaboration with the Department of National Education also provide assistance and English training. The length of time for such training again varies, some training programs mostly last for several months and some programs even last only for a couple of days. To establish a prolonged English training program is not possible especially due to the limited budget of the government and the time availability of the teachers to join such programs in the middle of their teaching duties (Novianti, 2010 p. 2).

Some book importers also invite writers of the books to Jakarta to give training to teachers in using their books. However, the training is sporadic and not scheduled regularly to give support to teachers. According to a volunteer English trainer (Interview, January 2010) most of the time, teachers are left alone to decide what they are going to do with the books. They are not trained to creatively develop supplementary material. As a result, most teachers will follow the book, and teach exactly from one section to another section, and this may cause boredom in the classroom.

The strengths and weaknesses of EBE implemented at present

The purpose of establishing international standard schools is to prepare the students in facing globalization, to be able to survive in the competitive world. The underlying idea of this is actually an effort to increase the quality of education in Indonesia to the same level of education abroad. This challenges the education world in Indonesia, stimulates awareness, breaks monotonous routines, raises questions whether we have done the right things in implementing EBE. In the point of view of some interviewees, including the official in the Ministry, the present way of implementing EBE is not really desirable.

Strengths of EBE

Students

Students of the international standard schools are the *crème de la crème*. Their competence is above average, they are highly motivated, and naturally they have more self-confidence. Most of them are raised in educated families from high socio-economic background. These students have a better opportunity in acquiring their English competence not only in their classes but also beyond classes through their e-mail correspondence with students attending sister schools abroad.

Parents

Parents' wish to have a good quality of education without sending their children overseas might be achieved. Coming from educated and high socio-economic backgrounds, they are involved in developing the school and their children's progress. They collaborate with the school in pursuing a better education for their children.

Teachers

Teachers are challenged to have a mastery of English, to be creative, and to seek further professional development. Teachers of maths and science have to collaborate with the English teachers in the school to deliver their teaching in English. These teachers also collaborate with their colleagues in the sister schools abroad. The collaboration broadens the teachers' horizon, increasing their self-confidence, and motivates everyone involved in creating a better atmosphere in the process of teaching and learning.

Classroom

The number of students per class is relatively small compared to the classes in mainstream schools. One class at the International Standard School consists of 28 students at the most, while in the regular class the number could reach up to 45 students. The classroom for younger learners is more attractive with the colourful painted walls and pictures as well as a reading corner. Students' works are on display that will motivate students to do better and better and raise their self-confidence. The atmosphere of the classroom is really conducive for learning.

Methods of teaching

It is student-centred with the role of the teacher as a facilitator instead of the one who knows all. The teaching learning process is more interactive and gives a chance to individual students to develop themselves and not be left behind. Students are active in the teaching learning process, collaborating with the other students to do the challenging but interesting tasks.

Schools

The existing schools compete to have a better quality in order to fulfil the criteria of becoming an International Standard School. To achieve this, the schools have to collaborate with other

international schools and the sister schools abroad to train their teachers and to broaden their knowledge in the teaching techniques, approaches, and methods and their pedagogy knowledge. As mentioned by Clegg (2007:12), that when the program runs successfully, it can raise the level of professional pride and self-confidence of the institution and enhance its reputation

Facilities

The international standard schools have better facilities than regular schools. Each classroom is well-equipped with an LCD and computer. Language laboratory as well as science laboratory are available and are up to date with modern multi-media equipment and facilities. The digital system of the library helps the students and teachers to access the information they need from around the world.

Weaknesses of EBE

Students

Students are not ready. They need time to reach adequate levels of L2 ability. If students start learning English at grade 1 in the primary level, some may not be ready to start learning mathematics and science through a new language as a medium of instruction.

Teachers

Teachers are not ready. They were not trained and prepared to teach subjects using English as a medium of instruction. Teaching mathematics and science through English also requires specialized pedagogical skills which have to do with the ability of the teacher to teach the subjects to learners with low levels of L2 ability. Teachers need to learn how to teach interactively and implement different aspects of classroom management. Most teachers do not have such pedagogical skills. As mentioned by the official at the Ministry (interview, February, 2010), many teachers still have problems in motivating the children to learn.

Teaching material

Based on the interview and reports of researches, qualified teaching materials in maths and science which are appropriate to the level of the students are badly needed. Bilingual books are now available in the market and quite a number of schools use these, but again the quality of translation is still in question.

Curriculum

The schools may adapt or adopt the international school curriculum in the country or abroad. However, guidance from the government is needed to make sure that students really get the best education that enable them to compete at the international level. Moreover, a clear policy is needed in order to help the students to prepare for national exams in the national language.

Schools

To be accepted in an International Standard Junior or Senior High-School, students should have an average grade of at least 8 out of 10 from the previous school. Grade 8 out of 10 shows that at least they have more than an average level of English mastery. They also have to pay a much higher tuition fee than regular schools. This creates elite schools which only accommodate smart students with more than average socio-economic status.

The international standard classes have better facilities than the regular classes and the students who pay a higher tuition fee in international classes obtain better treatment than those in the regular classes. These facts may create a social gap among the students in the same school. This brings out a question whether the educational philosophy that education is for all and that we should treat students equally is still applied here.

The schools need to be informed about how to develop their capacity to offer English as a medium of instruction. They need guidance on how to do this in respect of planning, infrastructure, staff training, materials, standards and assessment. This guidance should come from the Ministry (Clegg, 2007, p 12).

Teacher Education

The training of teachers for L2-medium education requires subject teacher-trainers who can pass on to subject teachers the skills of teaching a subject to low-language ability learners. It also requires language training which is at least partly related to the subject. There are as yet few if any teacher-trainers in Indonesia who can train subject teachers to teach through the medium of English as a foreign language. According to Clegg (2007, p.9) this is in line with experience elsewhere: subject specialists who can train subject teachers to teach in L2 are rare.

Bilingual Education involving English in Indonesia: possibilities for the future

Do you consider that some form of Bilingual Education would be good for your country to develop further over the next few years beyond its present position? Can you please give reasons for your answer?

One interviewee mentions that unless we are ready with teachers who have the full capability of teaching science and mathematics using English as a medium of instruction, then the quality of education is at stake. The Indonesian government should learn from the mistakes that other countries have made. Malaysia, for example, announced that it will abandon the use of English to teach mathematics and science, bowing to protesters who demanded more use of the national Malay language. Malay will be reinstated in state-funded schools starting in 2012, because teaching in English caused academic results in those subjects to slip (*The Jakarta Post*, 7/17/2009). Some form of EBE is necessary in order to take account of globalization, to prepare the young generations to be able to express themselves, to negotiate with people from different countries.

However, we have to make sure that EBE is in accordance with the Ministry's plan to improve the quality of education to face the global challenge.

If so, on what scale and in what directions do you consider it might/should develop?

All interviewees agree that the first and most important step is to empower the teachers, especially the young ones with appropriate teaching approaches and strategies. Faculties which provide teacher training for English should prepare their students with the skills and pedagogy for teaching mathematics and science, with English as the medium of instruction. The British Council and other agencies should collaborate with the universities and the Ministry to provide training for trainers, and to develop teaching materials needed as well as to give support for teachers' professional development. Close monitoring and evaluation should be done to select the schools with *RSBI* and *SBI* certification. The regional districts should not push the schools to apply for the *RSBI* and *SBI* certification when they are not ready.

Conclusions and Recommendations

The researcher undertaking the present study would like to point out that the conclusion of this paper is her own, though she wishes to acknowledge the positive influence which researchers such as Coleman, Bax, and Clegg as well as the eminent persons she interviewed have had on her.

Time-frame of the Project

It makes sense to follow the sensible advice of Bax (2010) in his recent report that it is too early to judge whether the implementation of EBE is successful or not in Indonesia since it is still in the early stages of development. However, the future of a generation of students is at stake. Supports from the government and other agencies, such as the British Council who has more experience in other countries, to make the program running well are indispensable.

Numbers and Quality of *SBI* schools

The mushrooming of Prospective International Standard Schools indicates that the existing schools accept the government's initiative to improve the quality of education to reach the international standard. On the other hand, the euphoria of *RSBI* and *SBI* is also due to the substantial block grant provided by the government to support its development. Within three years, from 2005-2008, more than 1000 international standard schools (*RSBI/SBI*) consisting of primary, junior high, high-school, and vocational schools are in operation. It remains a question what will happen to the public schools when the government discontinues the funding after three years of having the *RSBI* label. It is recommended that the Ministry could closely enforce the criteria for admitting schools onto the *SBI* programme. Opening the door too widely for schools to be *RSBI* when they do not

fulfill the criteria of *SBI* could backfire. It would be better at this stage that the Ministry concentrates on increasing the quality of the schools, rather than the quantity.

In addition to that, perhaps it is high time the Ministry gives more opportunity to private schools to obtain the *SBI* label. In that case, the government does not have to prepare special funds for schools offering this programme. It is common anywhere that private schools charge higher fee than public schools and no one should complain.

Human resource

This study finds that the main problem in the implementation of EBE in Indonesia is that the teachers are generally not prepared to teach their subjects using English when the schools decide to apply for the *RSBI* status. The main concern is that the English competency of the teachers is very low, mostly at the novice or elementary level. The common initial strategy used by the teachers is the use of English only in the opening and closing of the lesson. Gradually, some classroom instructions are delivered in English and scientific terms are translated using a dictionary. The progress made by the teachers, though it seems slow and almost insignificant, is due to the trainings from the Ministry in collaboration with universities. Some schools also provide English training for teachers after class. All of these training events and opportunities for professional development should be continued regularly to improve the quality of the teachers.

Training Materials

From the interview, discussion and research papers, it is clear that teachers need support for their professional development. What kind of training would be suitable for those who are not prepared to teach their subjects in English? According to a director of studies in an international standard school (interview, March 2010), teachers are tired of learning merely the theories of teaching approaches and methodology, what they need is how to apply such theory by watching video training materials. The British Council could hold a workshop for teachers so that they can also have a discussion after watching the video training material. Teachers also need materials for teaching listening (CDs, VCDs) that they can bring home to prepare their lessons. It is suggested that the British Council produce such material which is user-friendly, "just clicking away or pressing the button" accompanied by a teacher's guide, in order to provide support for the limited English competency of many teachers.

Teaching Materials

Most of Mathematics and Science books are still imported and quite expensive. Most private international standard schools use these books on the foreign curriculum. From the recent conferences which the researcher was invited to attend, she found that *RSBI* teachers tend to use the bilingual books which were written by university professors. There was a complaint though

that the vocabulary used is sometimes too high for the level of elementary or junior high schools. It would be a great help to the teachers if the Ministry, perhaps with assistance of British Council, could offer more guidance in this area.

The Image of SBI and the misconceptions

Printed mass media conveys more negative than positive perceptions of *RSBI/SBI*. It focuses more on the issue that *RSBI/SBI* caters almost exclusively for the wealthiest sector of society, the fact that education should be for all, and the block grant that the Ministry provides for the *RSBI*. The support from the mass media is necessary to promote *RSBI/SBI*. The Ministry needs to include journalists in reshaping the image of *RSBI/SBI*. Not only that it promotes EBE but the feedback from the press and public will be useful for the betterment of its implementation. In order to clear the misconceptions about the programme, it is suggested that the Ministry gives more information about the International Standard Schools to the public through printed media and television so that feedback from the public can contribute to an evaluation of the programme and improvement can be made.

In conclusion, it is too early to judge the implementation of EBE in Indonesia. However, close monitoring from the Ministry of National Education is needed in order to review, evaluate, and support the existing international standard schools. Research and conferences on EBE would inspire the existing schools to learn from one another and hopefully will increase the quality of education.

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BIODATA

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Learning through English: Chapter 3

Insights from SOUTH KOREA

WonKey LEE

Public School English Education Reinforcement Policy (PSEERP)

South Korea is located in the Far East between China and Japan, with a population of about 48 million. It is less than half the size of Great Britain. Recently it joined the OECD group, and it is often mentioned as an example country which was successful in both democratization and industrialization in a relatively short period. Education is often mentioned as a key player in all the developments in South Korea.

In South Korea, education is everybody's concern because the society has become very competitive in every aspect of life. To survive the intense competition and secure quality of life in the future society, everybody believes, education is an essential means to make individuals competent and competitive. Due to the lack of natural resources, Korean people generally agree that it is human resources that they can turn to. Education is thus regarded as crucial and essential for their future.

South Korea has been operating a national curriculum system since mid 1950s. As of 2010, the national curriculum has been revised about ten times and it was last revised in 2008. There have been many changes in every aspect of society and education in the last 60 years. Despite all those changes, the national curriculum keeps being implemented across the whole country, notwithstanding the differences in many aspects of life in regions and in living standards.

In Korea, it is clearly understood by everyone that school education exists to help students achieve the objectives set in the national curriculum, and this goal has never been neglected or changed. Thus all the educational policies are made and implemented with these curriculum objectives in mind, therefore, in a highly centralized, top-down manner. The national curriculum has been a very powerful driving force, but now it is often observed that the national curriculum acts as a restricting factor because of its prescriptive nature and inflexibility.

In 2007, the current president put forward, as a presidential candidate, an election pledge that he would transform English education in Korea. This pledge was meant to correct and improve the Korean ELT which has been regarded, and thus often criticized, as a 'high-cost low-outcome' enterprise. So the presidential transit committee formed and announced a so-called PSEERP, or Public School English Education Reinforcement Policy in early 2008. Many people still suspect that this policy was motivated for political rather than for educational reasons. Paying private tutoring fees for their children's English education was a great burden to parents who were all eligible voters, and also the English divide created by the private education of English was considered a potential threat to the national unity of Korea. So, it was suggested that these problems be resolved by reinforcing English education in state public schools, and thus, PSEERP was born and is being now implemented across all Korea.

ELT, Immersion and Teaching English in English

Among many specific policies, there was a policy of English immersion education, the gist of which was to have all the school subjects taught through the medium of English. This was initially intended to give more opportunity of exposure to English to students, and to enhance and improve the Korean ELT.

In fact, this proved to be too ambitious. The biggest difficulty was that there were not sufficient numbers of teachers who could carry out immersion-type English education. Moreover, there were many worries and complaints from teachers, parents, students and from the media. No wonder those criticisms were not manageable on the part of the policy makers. Later on, the Ministry of Education, Science and Technology (hereafter MEST) officially announced that this immersion-type of English education would not be implemented within the national curriculum system.

Instead of the immersion type English education, the central government decided to enforce a TEE policy, which is about teaching English in English, and teaching other content subjects in the Korean language. This is a moderate type of, or reduced version of, the English immersion which was initially attempted.

On the other hand, Busan Metropolitan City Office of Education (hereafter BMCOE) which appreciated the value of the immersion type of ELT, decided to run a number of experimental schools for English immersion teaching, in line with the national curriculum. They called this immersion type of English teaching 'content-based instruction (CBI) in English.'

EBE and TEE

Considering that the concept of EBE was not familiar to most of the Korean teachers, the current researcher defined EBE as teaching content subjects (eg. mathematics or science, including English) through the medium of English. The CBI in English of BMCOE seems to be similar to EBE. EBE was

made distinct from TEE for the present research purpose. Here TEE means teaching only the subject English through the medium of English.

It is important to understand, however, that although TEE implies teaching English as a school subject, this does not mean that it is content-free and that it focuses exclusively on the development of language skills. On the contrary, the subject called English as a foreign language entails the teaching and learning of a variety of contents: grammatical knowledge, subject-matter knowledge, and cultural knowledge as well.

Quite properly, this content does include grammatical knowledge, since it is important that at some point in their education in English, Korean children should develop an explicit knowledge of grammatical concepts such as noun, verb, adjective, sentence, paragraph and many others, and also an explicit knowledge of rules of spelling, punctuation and conventions of discourse. There are many studies across the world which attach high importance to KAL (Knowledge About Language) as an important component of foreign language education at school, and it is not intended that this should be ignored in Korea.

Themes and topics are also importantly dealt with. The national curriculum strongly recommends that textbook writers select and include a variety of topics in English textbooks from among the topics list attached to the end of it. It is stipulated that selections should be made from among topics about daily life, familiar topics of general interest, considering students' interests, in order to cultivate students' English communicative capacity, intellectual curiosity and problem-solving capabilities.

In addition, there is another kind of content which is essential in any modern foreign language curriculum which prepares learners for the global world, and this is 'cultural' content. The very fact that English is by far the main global language makes the teaching of cultural content all the more important, since this one language expresses aspects of thousands of different international, national, regional and local cultures across the world. It is most important that Korean learners at school should receive an initiation into this extensive cultural diversity which English makes available. This may take the form of literary culture (such as famous poems) or perhaps everyday culture (such as conventions of politeness and eating customs in different countries), and many other forms.

Korean Government's Document for English Language Policy: 'The Accredited TEE teacher scheme'

Among many policy documents, the MEST's '*Accredited TEE teacher scheme*' (dated 11 September, 2009) seems most relevant to the current research purpose. The MEST plans to enforce this scheme across all Korea during 2010.

The TEE target

The intention of the MEST is that through this scheme all English teachers will be enabled to teach English through the medium of English by the end of 2012. In 2007, the percentage of English teachers capable of teaching English by English using over 80% of English was 58%.

The TEE scheme

The scheme is a national scheme under the overall authority of the MEST. Each Provincial Education Authority (PEA) has a key role to play. Each PEA sets up a concrete action plan and submits it to the MEST (Sep. 2009) → MEST reviews the plan and provides budgets for the plan (Oct. 2009) → Each PEA starts to implement the accreditation scheme (Mar. 2010). The MEST will gather and manage the whole process of TEE teacher training on the basis of the results of pre-testing and the post-testing of trainees, a survey of satisfaction in relation to the training programs, and teacher training program quality control.

In order to rectify the phenomenon of 'the rich get richer, the poor get poorer' in training opportunities, and to enable all the teachers to become accredited through teacher training, each PEA is asked to enforce an obligatory teacher training policy by which all the teachers are required to complete teacher training programs. For this purpose, a database of training management is to be created and operated. Detailed action plans for this scheme are to be set up and implemented by each PEA, according to their circumstances and characteristics.

As the accredited TEE teacher scheme is implemented, a variety of customized or step-by-step teacher training programs is to be operated, so that all English teachers can become accredited after completing appropriate teacher training programs of their own choice.

Teacher training programs are to be diversified by increasing the number of elective courses, through periodical workshops within each PEA. Furthermore, some specialized teacher training courses shall be provided, for example, an intensive pronunciation course, a basic English language course, a teaching practice and presentation course, a trainer training course. A system of TEE teaching materials, teaching methods, open class video clips is to be made, to be shared by TEE program completers. For this, a diversity of teacher training program models lasting a diversity of periods shall be developed and operated, taking into account teachers' diverse needs and conditions, for example, a commuting type program during the semester, a residential type program during the vacations, a blended type program consisting of cyber+residential, or cyber+weekend type.

Individual trainee's records will be more systematically managed by the use of a database for teacher training completers through each PEA's educational administration and information system.

The accredited TEE trainers (mentors) and the teachers they work with

The superintendent of each PEA will issue a certificate of accreditation to English teachers who have proved to be outstanding in TEE on the basis of a variety of assessments in the areas of their overall teaching experience, accumulated teacher training records, and TEE ability. These accredited English teachers with the highest level of skill will be asked to act as mentor teachers and teacher trainers. They will receive a variety of incentives such as overseas training for longer periods, plus research funds.

It is expected that, through this accreditation scheme, accredited outstanding TEE teachers will be motivated to continue making efforts to improve their own special teaching competences, and will be recognized and acknowledged by the public, making them proud.

Using a specially developed teacher self-assessment tool, teachers will be asked to self-assess their TEE ability and English proficiency, and to make individual training plans, following which they will receive training according to their identified individual needs. Through this procedure, all the teachers will become TEE-accredited. Those who cannot obtain accreditation will be given customized training, especially in their weak areas. The MEST undertakes to provide support including budget, or expert consultation.

Training and practical teaching experience may take place in South Korea or in other countries in which arrangements have been approved by the MEST. For example, in the case of BMCOE, ten teachers who completed a six-month practicum at a primary school in the USA showed that they had become highly competent English users. They are due to replace Native Speaker English Teachers (NSETs) at Korean schools and to be given about 1,000 US dollars as a research fund. In Incheon Provincial Office of Education, outstanding TEE teachers who replace NSETs will be given additional marks for promotion and transfer to other schools, and opportunities for overseas training.

Research studies

Most of the data for the present chapter comes from interviews with key stakeholders. However, three research studies are briefly mentioned which have some relevance to BE in Korean schools.

The first study (Fouser, 2000) claims to feature the first elementary school in South Korea to embark on an immersion program. This was a private school, and the class which was observed benefited from two teachers, one Korean who taught in the Korean language and the other a native-speaker of English who taught in English. The two teachers worked in collaboration with each other. The teacher who was the native-speaker of English taught exclusively in English, with a consistent focus on lesson content and making frequent use of gesture and other aids. The report

was based mainly on one three-hour visit and so makes no claims about the long-term effectiveness of the immersion approach. Nonetheless, the pupils appeared to enjoy their immersion experience and showed no signs of being held back in their Korean language skills as a result of being immersed in English for part of their curriculum.

The second study (Kang, 2007) focuses on TETE in a South Korean elementary school and on the classroom processes of one teacher. There is a useful discussion of the merits or otherwise of teaching exclusively through the medium of English and of the sorts of pedagogy which might prove appropriate in countries such as South Korea where there is very little exposure to English outside the classroom. Although the benefits of providing a high level of rich input in English classes as in TETE are acknowledged, there is also sympathy for the view that there will be some advantage if this is complemented by carefully considered use of the first language (in this case, Korean). The first language, it is claimed, might advantageously be used for purposes such as: scaffolding texts from a cognitive perspective; promotion of transition to use of the foreign language; improvements in the negotiation of meaning; facilitation of foreign language intake; better foreign language comprehension; construction of a better learning environment. The teacher who was observed showed four types of language use: exclusively in Korean, exclusively in English, Korean followed by English equivalent, English followed by Korean equivalent. It seemed that the teacher's avoidance of the exclusive use of English in favour of a somewhat more mixed approach was not a reflection of any lack of proficiency in English on her part, but rather was influenced by her wish to sustain the students' interest. Among the conclusions were that much more research is needed, in order to learn more about the implementation of TETE in everyday classrooms and in particular to monitor and their levels of comprehension when English is extensively used.

The third study (Guilloteaux & Dörnyei, 2008) is not directly focused on TETE but has promising implications for it. The focus of the research was on motivation for learning English, in the case of 1300 students aged 12-14 in 40 classrooms, featuring 27 different teachers in South Korean Junior High Schools. The researchers claim that most research on second/foreign language motivation is based on questionnaires, interviews or diaries, and very little on what actually occurs in classrooms. A distinctive feature of their study is that it examines the links between teachers' classroom motivational teaching practice and their students' motivation. From their research they identified a range of observational variables which to a greater or lesser extent were associated with teachers' motivational practice. These included: 'tangible reward', 'personalization', 'intellectual challenge', 'team competition', 'individual competition', 'neutral feedback', 'process feedback', 'elicitation of self- or peer-correction' and others. An important implication of this study is that it shows that a range of motivational techniques are possible in South Korean classrooms, even when there is only limited exposure to English in Korean society and also when there has been a long history of teaching by a very different, more formal and conventional approach. As such, the study offers clues from research on how teachers might incorporate into their TETE approach a range of techniques which their students may find motivating.

Interviews with key stakeholders

Interviews were conducted in the way that follows: First, key stakeholders were selected and telephoned by the current researcher about the possibility of interviews regarding EBE or TEE policy in Korea. Eight key stakeholders were shortlisted. Second, Interview questions were emailed to each of them in advance with a careful explanation, so that each of them could make some preparations for the interview. Third, each interviewee was met by the current researcher, and interviewed about the questions previously sent. The atmosphere of the interview was made as friendly as possible, as stress-free as possible. All the interviewees were allowed to express any views, positive or negative, about the current government's ELT policy. Four interviews took place in a café nearby the interviewee's work place, two were done in the interviewee's office and two were interviewed over the phone. They were all cooperative and helpful.

Eight key stakeholders in English language education were interviewed. Two were from the MEST involved in the English Education Reinforcement Team, three were from the BMCOE (one of them a senior school inspector with responsibility for policy, one a junior school inspector with responsibility for teacher training, and one from a National University of Education and with responsibility for the BMCOE Advisory Committee).

One was a senior research officer from a provincial education authority, one was a primary vice-principal and former officer with responsibility for SMOE, and one was a primary school teacher involved in policy-making in another metropolitan office of education. Taken together, the eight interviewees could be considered as expressing an authoritative voice in relation both to policy development, implementation & monitoring and to teacher education and training.

Some members of the group were interviewed in relation to policy issues, and others interviewed in relation to teacher education and training issues. Some were interviewed in relation to both areas.

For both types of interview, a common pattern was followed:

- First, the interview focused on attitudes
- Then on views of the present context
- Then views on possibilities for the future.

Under each of these three headings a checklist of possible interview questions was available, based on the common format agreed for the East Asia network research group as a whole, but this was within an overall flexible approach which allowed the interviewer to follow-up and probe particular responses and for the discussion to take different directions if this seemed appropriate to the South Korean context.

Interviews with policy makers or implementers: Attitudes

Do you think it is necessary for teachers to teach English and/or other subjects in English?

The overall view was that it is necessary. A number of points were made in relation to this, including those listed below.

It is necessary, because students learning English in EFL environments such as Korea need more opportunity to be exposed to English, and to use English. The current policy is to improve their communicative ability in English, so the teaching is directed towards their English proficiency. However, it is recognized that the future society will need students who are well equipped with logical and creative thinking.

Current CLT methods are limited in that they require repetitive practice of new language items, causing boredom among students, and in most cases students' language level is far lower than their cognitive level, causing them to lose interest. Thus, a new method by which the already acquired knowledge and concepts can be activated and revitalized needs to be employed in order to improve students' English language ability.

In Korean EFL situations at present, learned expressions are seldom used for actual, practical purposes of communication, and this leads students to forget what they have been trying to learn. So it is necessary to create meaning-focused natural language-use situations, so that they actually feel the need to use the language. It is necessary, even if it is not clearly determined that CBI in English is viable or not in the Korean context, because there is a discrepancy between students' cognitive development level and their English language proficiency level in the national curriculum as well as in the teaching materials. CBI in English can be a practical alternative to help reduce this kind of gap.

Teaching English only in the designated class hours at school is not enough to provide students with sufficient opportunities for exposure to and use of English. It is desirable that other content subjects should be taught in English.

The above views however do not imply that teaching other subject content through the medium of English can necessarily be implemented immediately on a large scale. One view considered it as an eventual goal for Korean ELT to pursue, and considered that students' level should be carefully taken into account, i.e. the teaching and the curriculum should be level-sensitive. Another view was that EBE or CBI in English may be appreciated and employed in the future, but at present they are premature for practical reasons.

What are the objectives of the TEE or EBE policy?

The overall view was that a key objective must be to improve students' English proficiency by encouraging teachers to teach *English in English*. A related objective is that Korean ELT should gain the trust and confidence of parents, and reduce the current reliance on private tutoring of English.

In the discussion a number of particular objectives were mentioned, including the following: to activate communication skills in English by providing more exposure opportunities to students; to secure outstanding TEE teachers; to reinforce customized teacher training based on teacher's individual training plans; to enable all the English teachers to teach English in English; to enhance students' and parents' trust in ELT by improving teachers' special skills; to increase opportunities for exposure and use of English; to enhance the level of primary ELT and English teachers' special skills and teacher competitiveness, which aims for making them better than before, and better than others; to improve students' listening and speaking ability by maximizing their opportunities for exposure to English.

It was mentioned that the teaching of English in English does not seem to hinder a child's development of their proficiency in their first language nor to undermine their sense of Korean identity. So, teaching English in English is an inevitable and necessary solution to the problems of ELT in Korea and will lead to improvements in students' ability to use English for practical purposes.

What obstacles do you face in the implementation of this program/policy? How might the obstacles be overcome?

The main obstacle to be identified was the insufficiency of teachers' proficiency in English and their English teaching skills. It was felt that this insufficiency was leading to an un-cooperative attitude on the part of some teachers.

Among the particular obstacles which the discussion identified were the following: teachers' insufficient level of proficiency in English, and insufficient command of English-teaching skills; a lack of understanding by general teachers and parents; some resistance because of teachers' limited language proficiency level; social perceptions that English native-speaker teachers are better than Korean teachers should change; within some civil rights organizations, a lack of understanding of the issues involved.

Some initial thoughts were expressed on what is being done or might be done in order to improve the situation. These included: in view of the insufficient number of teachers who can confidently undertake TEE, then TEE teacher training should be strengthened so that all English teachers can undertake TEE; teachers' English proficiency should be considerably improved; any false or incorrect or insufficient understanding of TEE or EBE held by teachers, parents or others should be rectified; a variety of programs are run, such as English Only time (after school); 90-hour in-vacation training, 6-month intensive training, and 6-month overseas training; it is necessary to assign experimental teachers to regular schools rather than set up experimental schools.

What are the features of a successful/effective TEE or EBE program?

The responses mainly pinpointed the central and provincial governments' efforts in support of teacher training, plus teachers' sense of success achieved by the government's support.

Among the specific points mentioned by the respondents were the following: a steep increase in the number of teacher trainees; implementation of a TEE accreditation system through a rigorous assessment procedure to the teachers who proved their excellence in teaching English through the medium of English; continuous support for teacher development; increased exposure to English, and increased use opportunity to learn and use English; provision of various and meaningful learning experiences adapted to suit students' cognitive development level.

Experimental schools were reported as being mostly satisfied in that the students, teachers and parents felt privileged in all aspects of primary ELT (they felt they were differentially treated by the government); interest in ELT was generally enhanced, despite some side effects; teachers' improved proficiency level; trainee teachers' active participation in the training programs; a continuous series of training programs which were designed to help teachers develop step-by-step.

What factors are taken into account when deciding to embark on TEE- or EBE-type programs?

A number of key factors were mentioned as being important. One such was the need through TEE or EBE to enhance the effectiveness of ELT and to make it meet the needs of modern society. Another was the current limited level of many teachers' English proficiency. It was also important to take account of the extent to which local schools enjoyed suitable conditions and were sufficiently prepared. In addition, there were individuals or groups who were opposed to the policy, and so efforts would have to be made to help them change their mind.

A number of specific points were made in discussing this question. These were: defining the concept of TEE; gathering the opinions of ELT specialists and English teachers; the necessity and effectiveness of TEE; the need to develop assessment tools to assess teachers' English proficiency and their TEE ability; the need to introduce a scheme by which teachers can improve their TEE ability voluntarily; the need to discourage the reliance on private education by reinforcing the school education; the desirability of making competent teachers feel proud of their job of English language teacher; developing CBI in English (EBE) materials; developing CBI in English (EBE) teacher training; teachers' sense of mission and commitment.

It was also stated that the policy implementation should be finely adapted to local schools' conditions. There should be no hasty urge that teachers and students should quickly reach the pre-set objectives; instead, reasonable and achievable objectives that each local school can achieve should be set and implemented on the basis of agreement and participation of administrators, students, parents and teachers. Planning should take account of students' level of English proficiency, teachers' teaching skills and ability.

How are the opinions of stakeholders (students, teachers, parents) reflected on the policy-making?

It was generally considered that policies tend to be made top-down from MEST to provincial educational authorities to local schools, on the basis of consultations with specialists, university professors, experienced teachers and some parents. The opinions and suggestions of these people were taken seriously in setting up the policy of TEE and CBI in English.

Additional points made for this item were: through a close study of the necessity of TEE by questionnaire survey, plus informal gatherings for discussion, involving teachers, students and parents; through a variety of meetings whose participants are usually ELT specialists, professors, SMOE inspectors, experienced school teachers, and some parents. Most teachers and parents suggested an increase in the teaching hours for English, and students asked for more variety of teaching methods and for interesting learning content.

What are the possibilities of links with other English-speaking countries?

Overall, it was felt that most PEAs have links with overseas teacher training institutes, and they are willing to expand these links.

Specific points in this connection made by individual respondents were: has plans to send teachers overseas to enable them to enhance their abilities in TEE, and a budget for this will be provided; there are many overseas institutes in the USA, Canada, Australia, Britain, etc. in cooperation with SMOE; one respondent is in cooperation with Tennessee State University in the USA, for teacher training; there are plans to share information with the British Council and East Asian nations; it is necessary to cooperate with other English speaking countries as long as they can offer high quality teachers and programs; there are plans to exchange and cooperate with USA schools.

How desirable do you think the present way of implementing the policy is?

The general view was that at this stage, concentrating on the TEE policy seems desirable, and as circumstances improve, EBE or CBI may be considered for implementation.

In the discussion of this item the respondents made a number of specific points, including the following: TEE training will be expanded in the future; some attractive incentives are to be given in order to enhance teachers' development of their specialism.

One view stated that the running of CBI type programs is a desirable way of improving ELT in Korea. Another stated that there are some problems in policy-making procedures and policy-implementing timescales, and methods, and it was recommended that a uniform National Curriculum policy should be discouraged, and local educational authorities should be given authority to implement their own policies which are appropriate to their localities.

Another view considered that TEE/CBI is highly desirable and natural, but that more efforts should be made to strike a balance between fast achievers and slow achievers, and that eventually it will increase the degree of students' satisfaction.

What do you think about teachers of mathematics and science (any subjects) teaching their subjects in English?

The most commonly held view was that EBE or CBI in English, though having much to offer, seems to be a future objective. At the current stage, TEE is a reasonable and practical option. The central government is not considering implementing EBE at present, and does not encourage it, but provincial education authorities are not prevented from implementing it at their own discretion.

Some additional points were made by individual respondents. One stated that teachers' English proficiency is crucial because the lack of English proficiency has hampered the teaching of subject content of which in their own language they already have good command. Another stated that when on work experience in schools in the USA, teachers taught their subjects in English. Even if their English level was not fully satisfactory, they all successfully carried out their missions of teaching subjects in English. One was of the opinion that all the teachers should be made to teach all the subjects in English in the future. One believed that lopsided top-down implementation of a policy will not prove effective (so should be discouraged). Another held that by making an appropriate budget sufficient opportunity must be provided for teachers to train themselves. One stated that some schools are in fact already engaged in teaching content subjects (mathematics and science) in English.

Interviews with policy makers or implementers: The present context

Where are the decisions taken? Centrally/regionally/at schools and by whom?

In Korea, educational policies are mostly decided top-down. In the decision-making process, a variety of opinions from a variety of walks of life are listened to. Once policies have been determined, they are conveyed to the PEAs, and the PEAs implement according to their own action plans.

The MEST began to promote the TEE policy in 2000, and 16 PEAs in Korea began to set up a variety of action plans. The SMOE set up a 4-year action plan, and began to accredit TEE teachers in 2009 for the first time in Korea, and the other 15 PEAs have plans to implement the accredited TEE teacher scheme from 2010.

When should TEE or EBE start (what grade/level), and why?

The national curriculum stipulates that primary ELT begins at the 3rd grade. Making a start at this early point will increase the exposure to English and opportunities to learn and use it. The policy is implemented initially through running experimental schools; and a gradual transition is being made from partial TEE to full TEE.

How do you know the objectives are being met?

The main response was that this is best known through the use of a variety of ways of assessing students' and teachers' language proficiency, and also by taking account of the reports on the results of running the experimental schools

Further responses indicated that use was made of assessing students' English communication ability and their teachers' English language proficiency and English teaching ability; also by assessing the degree of students' English language improvement; by analyzing reports on the results of the experimental schools which draw on qualitative and quantitative data; and by use of students' self-assessment and performance tests.

How is the impact of the policy measured?

This was achieved by the reports on the experimental schools, by a variety of assessments, and by interview or questionnaire surveys.

Further responses indicated: by the increase in the number of teachers who conduct TEE, and the degree of their using English in teaching; by the increase in the number of schools or classrooms which content-based instruction in English is conducted; by analyzing the experimental research reports, and the degree of satisfaction and achievements of teachers, students, parents, administrators; by assessing students' language proficiency (if they got higher accuracy and fluency in English, the policy's impact can be said to be effective); by asking through questionnaire about the degree of students' satisfaction of their teacher's classroom teaching.

What systems are in place for monitoring of the policy implementation?

PEAs are asked to report on the current state or results of the policy implementation. In addition, there is open class teaching at local schools

Several specific strategies were mentioned, including the following: feedback from teachers who completed the content-based instruction in English; research reports; the provincial educational authority may issue formal letters asking local schools to upload further information; head teachers can check through in-school inspection; regular self-assessment of schools by qualitative

assessment and performance assessment; inspection from the provincial educational authority; MEST's sampled testing; by assessing teachers' actual teaching; by tallying the number of teachers who actually teach English in English.

How is the policy implementation funded?

When a policy is agreed, it will have a budget, otherwise the initiative is not called 'policy'.

Funds are included in the national teacher training budget every year (recently increased to a great extent). There is budgetary support for provincial education authorities for TEE implementation; the final reports and public opinion about the policy are important criteria by which the budget is discussed and allocated. One view stated that the budget is allocated but is never enough, while another considered that since TEE is one of the core policies of the provincial office of education, there is little problem in providing sufficient budgets.

Who is going to teach? Who teaches? Local teacher? or NSET?

Responses indicated that this may involve any person who is considered 'expert'.

Mention was made of the following: Korean teacher may be engaged in solo teaching, or in co-teaching or team teaching with an NSET (Native Speaking English Teacher); university professors, trained teachers, NSETs may be involved. Experimental schools usually have priority in having NSETs, and sometimes more NSETs are allocated to experimental schools.

How are you going to train teachers (both foreign and local) for the policy implementation?

The training programs vary according to the particular PEAs which implement them. A wide variety of teacher training programs is offered.

Among the specific responses received in discussing this item were the following: every year the amount of training is getting bigger and bigger. There is a TKT online training program: 30 hours (twice a year) to 500 primary teachers and 500 secondary teachers in 2010. There is an advanced TEE course: 60 hours training on teaching methodology, TEE and EBE; there is mentoring for 100 primary teachers, and 100 secondary teachers in 2010; 40 'leading' teachers were given 15-hour CBI in English in an English teacher training course (once every year from 2009); 200 teachers were given 121-hour special teacher training course for CBI in English (twice every year from 2009); 120 hour training courses are offered to train teachers in using the materials, and teaching skills; BMCOE-developed teaching materials are used; content-based instruction method is used; a step-by-step teacher training is planned and budgeted; step-by-step (phased) training programs are planned.

Interviews with policy makers or implementers: Future possibilities

How will you ensure the sustainability of the program?

It was believed that TEE- or EBE-type teacher training programs will go on and expand in the future, in order to meet the needs of enhancing students' English proficiency. Some good effects of the program were already being seen, and it is expected to expand. Every year the size of training is getting bigger and bigger.

What is the impact of the policy on children in the long term perspective?

It was felt that students' overall proficiency in English will improve in the long run, if the policy keeps being implemented, with suitable support from the government

A number of specific points were mentioned, including the following: a national test of English is due to be introduced soon, and as a result students' attention will rise, which will have a good effect on them. Students will be able to become real English language users, who will be able to gather and process necessary information in English, beyond the level of improving only their English language proficiency. It was anticipated that two types of ELT may be envisaged in Korea: national test-oriented secondary school education and English proficiency-oriented primary school education. It was also anticipated that within the category of the national curriculum, two voices will keep colliding with each other: one favouring equal opportunity, the other seeking higher achievement in English. From a short-term perspective, learning English is helpful for getting a job or for university entrance, but from a long-term perspective, Korean citizens should become qualified for active membership of a global community.

What kind of future prospects do you have for the TEE or EBE?

The central government is planning to have all the English teachers TEE-accredited. When this has been achieved, English teachers will not be able to neglect the government's intention. This will mean that TEE and then EBE will be more activated than at present in Korean ELT settings.

According to the medium-range and long-term plans, all the English teachers are planned to be TEE accredited in order to help enhance students' communicative ability; outstanding TEE teachers will increase. 90% of teachers will be TEE-accredited, and 10% TEE-M accredited by 2012. (***TEE-Master** is higher than **TEE-Ace**). It was argued that this policy is in the right direction, so it will go ahead, improving itself; it is bright, because it proves to be useful and effective in improving students' English language ability; the future prospects and expectations for TEE or EBE will be bright and high because specialization of ELT, diversification of ELT. Lowered starting ages will act as a locomotive to lead ahead; teaching contents and methods will be improved. Teachers' zest for ELT is high, and basic conditions for ELT are constantly being improved. A greater variety of programs

will be expected to be run. Some schools are in fact already implementing the scheme of teaching content subjects (mathematics and science) in English.

Interviews with persons with responsibility for Teacher Training: Attitudes

What kind of support do you need for the success of this kind of teacher training?

Budgetary support was commonly mentioned, plus substitute teachers for the trainee teachers when they were taking a course.

Budgetary support might include developing teaching materials, and provision of competent teacher trainers. Other types of support mentioned as being needed were: an expert group who can assess objectively the open classes or videoed teachings are needed; and securing a sufficient number of highly qualified NSETs.

Interviews with persons with responsibility for Teacher Training: The present context

How many teachers do you train/prepare for TEE or EBE?

The numbers varied from one respondent to another, including the following: 136 teachers for 2 programs in 2008; 177 teachers in 2009; 240 teachers in 2010; 1,564 teachers in 2008; 2,237 teachers in 2009; one-month course for 140 teachers; university-entrusted one-week training courses for 450 teachers; about 240 teachers

Does your institution cater for pre- and in-service training and development for TEE or EBE teachers (both local and foreign)?

The main response was that all the PEAs have their own in-service training institutes, and they run their own training programs.

Responses indicating what specific institutions did included the following: language proficiency programs; improvement programs, teaching methods, teaching practice (6 month overseas practicum in the USA, Canada), 181 teachers in 2009; English proficiency improvement programs, teaching methods, presentation, discussion and debate in English, in-Korea intensive course; in-service teacher training for teacher development; in-service training

How do you know the objectives are being met?

The main response mentioned interview or questionnaire survey, and also by having teachers hold an open class teaching

Other strategies mentioned informal meetings with participants; analyzing the trends of teachers participating in training programs; by making comparisons between pre-test scores and post-test scores in the training programs; by making their teachings open to the people from outside; a mini TEE presentation and a questionnaire; teachers' self-assessment at the end of the course, and a variety of performance tests within the course.

How long does the training take?

The duration of training programs varies depending on each PEA. Intensive 6-month programs are implemented across the country with budgetary support from the central government.

Among the particular examples given were the following: 30, 60, 90, 120, 150 hour programs; 8 week, 5 month, 6 month programs; 30, 60, 90, 120, 150 hour programs; 8 week, 5 month, 6 month programs; two-week residential course (78 hours); one-month residential course (175 hours); basically a 6 month full-time program (8 hours a day, 5 days a week)(trainees are exempted from teaching. Substitute teachers are provided).

Who is taking charge of the teacher training programs?

This is undertaken by PEA's inspectors and NSET trainers. Also involved may be ELT specialist trainers, some with Korean as first language and some with English as first language.

Is there a professional development program for teacher trainers? If so, what does it involve? Does it include mentoring?

Usually university professors are involved in consultation and advice-giving.

Specific mention was made of the following points: it can involve literature study; participating in CBI in English workshops; exchanges with overseas teacher training institutes. There is no fixed curriculum. It may happen through discussion with and advice from university professors. Use is made of opinions or feedback from the participants; there is consultation with inspectors from all 16 provinces in Korea; there are seminars, workshops, international conferences. When necessary, trainer training is given any time.

What are the components of the TEE or EBE training programs?

The programs mostly consist of English proficiency components and ELT skills components.

Among the specific points mentioned in discussion were the following: Basic level programs consist mainly of language improvement programs; mid-level programs focus also on TEE and CBI in English. English language related to the teaching content is emphasized in the training programs. For basic level courses, improving English proficiency is given more emphasis, and for higher level courses, improving TEE ability is more emphasized. English language proficiency accounts for about 80%; teaching methods part accounts for about 20%.

How does your institution keep itself informed about the theoretical background of TEE or EBE?

This is mostly achieved through lectures and teacher training materials, also through literature study; action research reports.

What systems are in place for keeping informed about progress in schools? How is the impact measured? What is happening in schools? (e.g. research, meetings in schools, attendance at conferences etc.)

A number of strategies were mentioned, e.g. by the reports from the experimental schools; by open class teaching. Those completing their TEE teacher training program are required to open their class teaching to other people concerned, including parents. A post-training survey is conducted to find out the degree of satisfaction of participants about the training programs.

How are the teachers assessed at the end of the program?

It is common for a comparison to be made between participants' pre-test scores and post-test scores in English proficiency and teaching skills. Their assessment is also based on actual teaching practice, presentations, and a questionnaire.

What obstacles do you face in training teachers to teach their subject through English?

The main obstacles are the insufficiency of teachers' English proficiency and of teaching skills, plus large-sized classes

Mention was made of the difficulty in explaining of important concepts and technical words in English due to the teachers' and students' lack of English proficiency, especially in speaking; the class size, which is too big to conduct level-based or individualized teaching; a lack of teaching skills, classroom management and communicative language ability.

How do you know what is happening in schools?

This was achieved by listening to the experimental school, by observing and discussing the open teaching classes, and by interview or questionnaire survey of teachers who completed the training program, and of staff who run the program..

Specific points to be mentioned were: by consulting opinions presented by the Forum of Experimental Schools, which consists of all experimental schools every year; most schools are required to run open classes, by which assessment and evaluation are made on the basis of the open classes; through class observation, monitoring, conference, SIG club.

How are methods & materials chosen for TEE- or EBE-type programs?

Overall, it was considered that there is no uniform way of choosing teaching methods and materials. PEAs do this at their own discretion.

PEA-developed materials are used, and a variety of teaching methods are employed which are applicable to local schools; teaching materials are selected or developed by expert teacher trainers, with the development and selection being approved through the teacher education program committee and through discussion with all teacher trainers.

Interviews with persons with responsibility for Teacher Training: Future possibilities

What are the future prospects of the TEE or EBE?

The general view is that the future is bright, and that TEE will become EBE in the future.

Since students' English language proficiency has improved, and as a result more parents are satisfied, the future prospect of CBI in English seems bright; all English teachers are expected to teach English through the medium of English. The innovations of TEE and EBE will keep going and will be disseminated, as circumstances continue to improve..

What changes do you foresee in pre-service/in-service training curriculum and what are the resource implications?

Overall, overseas training opportunities are preferred. A standardized system of developing materials for all Korea is needed.

Specific points made in discussing this item were: a higher level program needs to be developed, and the content areas, currently mathematics and science, will be expanded and diversified to other subject areas; overseas programs may become more popular; the number of participants in training programs will increase; overseas experienced teacher trainers can be involved in teacher training, and exchanges with overseas institutes will be more activated; practicum type teaching practice in overseas schools should be expanded, because it is effective despite its high cost. Eventually these innovations will prove more economical. There should be an all-country sharing system for developing materials, and TEE support should be shared with all schools across the country; a greater variety of programs are expected to be developed and run.

Conclusion

In the present survey, one of the main ELT policy issues in Korea, TEE or EBE, has been investigated. The TEE policy was introduced by the former government, and was in operation, though not to a great extent. However, the current government established TEE as the main methodology of ELT in Korea, and it has attracted widespread attention. The underlying aim of the TEE is to enhance the effectiveness of ELT in Korea, which was often criticized due to its 'high-cost, low-outcome' results. As Korean society changes, it has become necessary for people to speak and write English and not just to understand it. The traditional way of teaching English was regarded as inefficient to meet this requirement.

Carefully considering the limitedness of circumstances of ELT in Korea, and the availability of educational resources, the TEE policy emphasized exposure to and use of English for students as much as possible. The policy is essentially about creating or forcing English to be actually used in the classroom by teachers and students. This means that teachers are strongly encouraged to USE English in teaching English, even though their teaching may not entirely be in English. They can increase the proportion of the use of English in their teaching as they get used to it. Students are also encouraged to use English in responding to their teacher's questions, requests or instructions, and also in interacting with the other students in their classes while performing learning tasks.

Korea has a national curriculum system, in terms of which all education at school is conducted, and educational policy is made nationally, ie, centrally or top-down. The MEST is the key policy-making body, and PEAs and local offices of education are policy-enforcing bodies. So basically the TEE has been encouraged to be conducted across all Korea. The central government's policy is focusing on TEE, and thus mainly teacher training for TEE is being carried out in most PEAs.

On the other hand, a provincial educational authority (BMCOE) wished to go further than the TEE policy. They attempted EBE, which was defined as teaching content subjects through the medium of English. They call this CBI in English. That was intended and reinforced by the PEA superintendent who thought TEE only was not enough, and EBE or CBI in English should be conducted to achieve the objectives of the national curriculum and in addition to increase the impact and cost-effectiveness of ELT. They ran experimental schools in the Busan area and are testing the effectiveness and the applicability of this EBE, or CBI in English.

According to talks with BMCOE experimental school teachers, the EBE or CBI in English seems to be inefficient in some ways, especially in students' understanding. Despite teacher's good proficiency in English, only a few students can manage to follow the teacher's English, leaving many of the students uninterested and in the dark. In this sense, EBE or CBI in English seems to be premature generally.

The attitude toward EBE, or CBI in English, is generally positive. EBE can be eligible as an objective of the future ELT policy, but the current circumstances and conditions are not yet appropriate for its widespread implementation.

The situation of EBE, or CBI, in Korea is that it is generally not active. TEE, which is the prior stage, is strongly encouraged and supported by the central government in a variety of aspects such as teacher training, materials development, and English-friendly environment constructions.

In this context, the future prospect of EBE is generally bright, but it may take quite a long time. The nationwide success of TEE would be a prerequisite to a nation-wide implementation of EBE.

The central government does not prohibit PEAs or local schools from conducting EBE, or CBI in English, but nor does it encourage it. Accordingly, any willing PEAs can conduct EBE or CBI in English, but at the moment, most PEAs are following the central government's position that CBI in English could be more effectively and efficiently conducted after TEE has fully settled down.

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BIODATA

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Learning through English: Chapter 4

Insights from THAILAND

Sonthida Keyuravong

The rapid growth of information and communication technology in the past decades has driven Thailand to become a knowledge-based society and to develop a knowledge-based economy. The world is one big global village for people to share and make use of the knowledge which they acquire. As a result, developing countries like Thailand and many others have been making great efforts to create international cooperation and networks. With this paradigm shift, English has inevitably become an international language for people to communicate their personal issues and business transactions around the world.

Thailand has always been a largely monolingual society, since it never was colonized by western powers in the 17th Century. Even though Thailand has about 80 dialects (Smalley, 1994: 1) the official language and the language of daily life has always been Thai. Portuguese was Thailand's lingua franca from 12th-14th century as the language of trade in the Ayutthaya period (1350-1588). English became a new lingua franca for Thailand replacing Portuguese, and it has been used and taught in Thailand as a foreign language since its introduction in the 17th Century (Punthumasen, 2007; Durongphan et.al, n.d.; Tripasai, 2005).

English language curriculum

English was first introduced in the 17th Century for the purpose of modernizing the country to support Thailand's independence from western powers. English was studied as a subject in the royal schools, and in later years opportunities were open to common people. In 1921 English became a compulsory subject in schools for all students beyond Grade 4 (Durongphan et.al., n.d.; Tripasai, 2005). English language education has gone through a considerable evolution ever since and has always maintained its status as a foreign language.

In 1995 the Ministry of Education (MoE) saw the need for her people to become competent in English, and as a result announced the policy for all schools to start teaching English from Grade 1 onwards (Keyuravong, 2008). However, in reality, some schools begin teaching English at Grade 3 because of the lack of teachers and other resources (Punthumasen, 2007).

In the Thai basic education curriculum (2009), English is taught as one of a range of foreign language subjects in school (MoE, 2009). The aims of foreign-language learning are for learners to acquire a favourable attitude towards foreign languages, to be able to communicate in various situations, seek knowledge, engage in a livelihood, and benefit from further education at higher levels. The main content of the curriculum links English with communication, culture, other subject content and community (MoE, 2009). The number of hours of English teaching at each level varies (see Table 1. overleaf). English starts in Grade 1, but only for one hour a week to ensure mastery of the Thai language and mathematics in the early years of education. Students at the upper secondary level have fewer compulsory hours, but their extra hours of English come from their electives, depending on their interest and requirement of their stream of study (Arts, or Science).

Table 1: Number of hours of English instructions at primary and secondary levels

Level	Hours of teaching/year	Languages
Primary 1-3	40 hours year (1 hour per week)	English only
Primary 4-6	80 hours/years (2 hours per week)	
Lower secondary	120 hours/year (3 hours per week)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • English first foreign language • Other foreign languages such as Chinese, Japanese, French, German, Arabic.
Upper secondary	80 hours/years + extra hours of electives (2 hours/week + electives)	

However, government schools that are ready in terms of budget, staff, facilities, etc. can apply to teach more English hours outside this framework. Very often the parents are the key to this demand (*personal communication*).

Policy documents

There are many systems of English Bilingual Education (EBE) in Thailand. The government sees the needs to standardize all the existing programs, and as a result issued the document '*Policy, Principles and Process of Teaching and Learning's Management of Ministry of Education's Curriculum in English*' (BEID, 2001). The policy can be briefly summarized as follows:

- The EBE Program is considered an alternative education for schools. The provision is to be in some subjects.
- Schools need to secure some funds to cover a portion of the fee for students who have passed the entrance test to study in the English Program.

- The administration of the management of the English Program must extend the assistance to the Thai Program covering the use of audiovisual aids, English language laboratory and personnel.
- The EBE program must preserve the security of the nation, religion, royalty, the Thai language, Thai art, and Thai tradition and culture.
- The program must be systematically supervised and assessed at regular intervals to continuously solve problems and to improve the quality of instruction.
- The fee for the program must be appropriately determined and is to be checked by an appropriate authority office.
- The management of the program must follow the guidelines and the procedures issued by the Ministry of Education as well as following the regulations in the curriculum stipulated by the Ministry of Education.

With the varieties of programs and various responsible bodies, all schools still have to follow the policy set by the Ministry of Education. However, the international schools of western-orientation are an exception to this.

Research into Bilingual education in Thailand

Twelve EBE research studies conducted from year 2004-2009 nation-wide have been reviewed. Those conducting them are researchers, university lecturers and graduate students in the field of education using both qualitative and quantitative research paradigms. The quantitative studies involve survey (by telephone). Most of the qualitative studies are case studies and instruments used are in-depth interviews, classroom observations, field notes, audio and video recordings, lesson plans, and syllabus notes.

The respondents are school administrators, head teachers, classroom teachers of English, Social Studies, Mathematics and Science subjects, as well as students and parents. The research study investigated all levels of education from primary to high schools in both public and private education, except pre-primary or kindergarten. There is no data on studies of bilingual education in vocational schools.

The topics for research are the current state of operation; the factors which contribute to its success and the obstacles which impede the programs; the perceptions and attitudes of students, teachers, and parents about the programs; and classroom practice both in language classes and other content classes.

The information obtained from the studies is summarized below:

Models of EBE used

Ngamsom (2007) and Vigilante (2007) report four EBE models in their studies

- *English Plus* (Native Speaker program) – In this program, only the English language subjects are taught by native speakers of English.
- *Bilingual Program* – In this program some subjects are taught in English and some in Thai.
- *Immersion Program* – With this program some subjects are taught entirely in English.
- *English Integrated Studies (EIS)* – This model uses English as a medium of instruction to teach Computing, Mathematics and Sciences.

Management of teaching and learning

Decha (2006) and Noisakul (2006) report their findings regarding the management of learning and teaching in the following aspects:

- *Methods of teaching*: In a good-practice bilingual school, a student-centred approach is used, and each class consisted of 34-37 students.
- *Extra-curricular activities*: Native speaker teachers helped plan extra activities outside class (Decha, 2006). English field trips to learning resources both in and outside school premises and going camping were regularly organized to enhance students' abilities (Noisakul, 2006).
- *Assessment*: Students' development was evaluated through authentic assessment (Decha, 2006). They were assessed based on the three main criteria; the language skills, ethics, and their desired characteristics (Noisakul, 2006). The school used commercial standardized tests to assess students' ability in English.

Recruitment of teachers

Noisakul (2006) reported that successful programs derived from the recruitment of qualified teaching staff who had a good command of the English language. In addition, Thai and foreign teachers exchanges of knowledge, and instructional materials and learning resources were provided for teachers to help them develop professionally.

Program evaluation

The program evaluation committee evaluated the program at the end of each academic year. The evaluation was focused on students' academic achievement and parents' satisfaction. The evaluation was later used for the improvement and development of the program and for its general administration (Noisakul, 2006).

Obstacles or problems affecting the program

Problems are widely discussed among these research studies (Vigilante, 2007; Ngamsom, 2007; Nonthapak, 2004; Noisakul, 2006; Phonlabutra, 2008; Jansong, 2004; Bax, 2009; Decha, 2006). One common prominent problem among all studies was the problem with the foreign teachers in the following aspects:

- foreign teachers' qualifications – many foreign teachers did not have a degree in education and this has an effect on quality of instruction
- difficulty in finding teachers
- a number of teachers were employed part-time, which means they did not have time to discuss matters with students after class.

Another problem with the program was the different proficiency level of students in one class, causing the instruction to be problematic.

Perceptions of students, teachers, and parents

Attitudes were also studied from the perspectives of students, teacher and parents (Phonlabutra, 2008):

- *Students:* Students had favorable attitudes towards the program. Decha (2006) and Phonlabutra (2008) report that students in the program felt confident in speaking English.
- *Teachers:* Thai teachers also liked the program. Many of them thought that teaching in English promoted active participation and expression of ideas of the students. However, the English-speaking teacher that taught subject content sometimes did not provide much detail when teaching.
- *Parents:* They perceived that the program was a good choice for their children because of the small class size, a less competitive learning atmosphere, and a group of peers with high motivation to learn.

Recommendations

The recommendations derived from these studies (Jansong, 2004; Nonthapak, 2004; Noisakul, 2006; Bax, 2009) addressed all parties concerned as follows:

- *Teachers:* Teachers should be trained on how to write lesson plans, and design the tools to evaluate programs.

- *School administrators:* School administrators should be trained in the management of EBE programs. Schools should: allocate a specific person to be responsible for coordinating the program; they should seriously consider the quality of teachers before employment and determine clearly the proportion of Thai and foreign teachers to fit the situation; they should train the foreign teachers on Thai culture and Thai language. Schools should encourage cooperation between Thai and foreign teachers so that they can work harmoniously; they should provide resources for the students. Schools should evaluate the program every year and involve staff in the process; they should share the same materials among all schools to make sure that the materials will be relevant to the curriculum; and they should give information about EBE program to parents and people in the community.
- *Parents:* Before deciding to apply, parents should study the operation and curriculum of each school carefully before making any decision.
- *Ministry of Education:* The MoE should set up a central body to take care of its operation for sustainability. The body can take care of the following work: recruiting qualified teachers and control the standard of teachers in the program; organizing systematic development and training of teachers so that teachers can improve their skills and understand their roles, and important classroom techniques and approaches. The topics of training could include classroom management, in particular concerning the role of teacher and classroom assistants, questioning, checking learning, and developing effective learning tasks. Regarding materials for teaching, there are three suggestions: a) facilitate all schools to share their resources or materials to make sure that the materials are relevant to the curriculum; b) give schools guidance and assistance in accessing and choosing materials for teaching content subjects through English; and c) encourage publishers to establish an exhibition or book fair in different regions for teachers and administrators to investigate books in the content areas in English. The MoE should evaluate the program regularly to control the standard of the program; it should conduct a study to investigate the proficiency and the knowledge of students in the program both in English language and their content area, using clear statistical data from test scores from samples across the country, to compare the English levels of students in the English program and their content knowledge in the Thai programs; and it might encourage universities to develop a teacher education program for content areas in which teachers develop their English language skills so that they can teach content subjects through the medium of English.

Interviews with key stakeholders

The interviews were conducted with nine persons and they included five groups. The first group was two senior educators from the MoE, who answered questions concerned the policy, the implementation and the future directions. The second group comprised two ‘movers and shakers’ who are university teachers with more than twenty years of teacher training experience with the

MoE. They were interviewed on aspects of implementation and future direction. The third group was a researcher from the Faculty of Education who conducted research in bilingual education in Thailand. She was knowledgeable on the topic of the implementation of the EBE in schools in Bangkok. The fourth group was two classroom teachers who were asked about the implementation and the future direction. The last group was a supervisor who was asked about the implementation of EBE.

Current policy and priorities for education at school

What do you consider to be the current national policy priorities and developments for education at school?

The current national policy priority of Thailand concerns the provision of education for all children. The free education policy covers vocational and non-formal education at all schools supervised by the Government, the private sector, and local administrative organizations. The policy also attempts to increase access to further education through student loan schemes, linked to policy concerning the production of knowledgeable and capable graduates. (BIC, 2008; GPRD, 2009; Hill & Knowlton, 2009; Kowitwanij, 2009; Pichai, 2009)

The access to 15-year free education covers the three time periods: three years of pre-school, six of primary school and six of high school. By 2009, the *12 Year Free Education Scheme* had already been implemented (Kowitwanij, 2009).

Where are the policy decisions taken which affect education at school? Centrally/regionally/at schools and by whom?

Education in Thailand is administered at three levels: central, sub-national and school levels (UNESCO, 2009). At central level the administration and management is divided among five main Offices, namely Office of the Permanent Secretary (OPS), Office of Basic Education Commission (OBEC), Office of Private Education Commission (OPEC), Office of Higher Education Commission (OHEC), and Office of Education Council (OEC).

At sub-national level, the administration is divided into two administrative bodies; the education service areas (ESA) under the MOE, and local administrative organizations (LAO) under the Ministry of Interior (MOI). Both handle education management at a decentralized level (UNESCO, 2009).

At school level, the school is responsible for its own administration and management including academic matters, budgets, personnel, and general affairs. It is monitored by its board, consisting of representatives of parents, teachers, community groups, local administrative organizations, alumni, and scholars.

As for the private sector, they can provide education at any level and of all types. The overseeing of the administration, the monitoring of the administration and management, and the monitoring of the quality and standards of private institutions are undertaken by the MOE.

With all these levels of administration being brought to bear on schools, decision-taking is normally top down despite there being much talk about decentralization. However, for day-to-day operation schools do possess some autonomy. In the operation of EBE, schools have some freedom to act in ways of their own choosing.

How important is it for students at school to develop a good command of English?

For Thailand, the English language is associated with a good and well-paid job. People with a good command of English have better opportunities in education and in their career. For students at school it is essential to develop a good command of English, as this increases their chances of gaining a place at a good university, after graduation from which a good and well-paid job will be likely to follow.

What policies and forms of provision for the teaching of English are in place at present, and how successful or otherwise do these appear to be?

Clearly the main policy is the requirement that all students at primary and secondary levels should learn English beginning in 1995. This has caused considerable problems since teachers were not prepared for it. A large number of primary school teachers do not have a degree in teaching English. Quality of teaching is still generally predicated on the quality of individual teachers, not on the system.

The implementation of the 1999 National Education Act has prompted a transformation of language learning. One of the key programs of this transformation has been the establishment of an English Program (EP) aimed at providing full or partial Thai national curriculum subjects in English (BIC, 2008).

Interviews: EBE as implemented at present

To what extent does bilingual education take place at present and with which age-groups and types of schools?

In Thailand, EBE does not only have a variety of names but also has different degrees of inclusion of English language in the instruction. These names include International Program, Bilingual Program, English Program, Mini English Program. EBE operates at all level of education from pre-primary to graduate levels, as well as level occupational school levels (BIC, 2006). Different types of EBE schools at primary and secondary levels are described in the following sections:

International Schools

International schools are western-oriented schools adopting foreign systems of education, including The American School System, Advanced Placement Programme (AP), The British National Curriculum, The International General Certificate of Secondary Education (IGCSE), and The International Baccalaureate (IB) (OEC, 2007). These programs use English as a medium of instructions in all subjects, except Thai language classes and Social Studies topics that are related to Thai culture. There are also other systems which may use languages other than English to suit the diversity of Thailand's expatriate community (ISAT, 2005).

International schools providing basic education (K-12) in Thailand are under the supervision of the Special School Policy of the Office of the Private Education Commission. Policies, rules, regulations, and standards for the establishment of international schools are set by the Ministry of Education in accordance with a Council of Ministers Resolution. The number of international schools in Thailand has gradually increased from 91 schools in 2004 to 108 schools in 2007 (OEC, 2007).

English Program

Another model of EBE is called *English Program* or EP which took shape as an alternative to international education schools during the serious economic recession in 1997 when many families had to bring back their children from study abroad. Private schools started to offer an *English Program* to welcome these students (*E-library, 2003*). In 2001, the MoE drafted a policy for the operation of the schools to ensure the same standard across the whole country.

The *English Program* offers the teaching and learning of schools subjects following the Thai curriculum of the year 2001 (BEID, 2005). According to the Bureau of Education Innovation, Ministry of Education (2003), there are two types of English program; The Mini English Program and the English Program:

- *The Mini English Program (MEP)* teaches at least two core subjects in English (from eight subjects taught in school). The subjects in Thai language and social studies with aspects related to Thai culture are taught in Thai. The classes occupy at least 8-14 hours per week.
- *The English Program (EP)* teaches at least four core subjects in English including English Language, Science, Mathematics, and Physical Education. Thai language and social studies with aspects related to Thai culture are taught in Thai language. The classes occupy at least 15 hours per week.

EP and MEP are operated in mainstream schools (at pre-primary, primary and secondary levels) and vocational schools. EP and MEP operated in public schools, private schools, Bangkok Metropolitan schools, and demonstration schools of the Faculty of Education of various universities. The current numbers of EP and MEP schools are in Table 2 overleaf:

Table 2: Number of schools as of 2009

Types of Schools	EBE Type			Total
	EP	MEP	EP & MEP in one school	
Public schools (under OBEC, MoE)	30 (primary)	19 (primary)	1	50
	77 (secondary)	29 (secondary)	3	109
Private schools (under OPEC, MoE)	153	-	-	153
Bangkok Metropolitan schools (BMA)	12	-	-	12
Demonstration schools	8	-	-	8
Total	280	48	4	332

The *English Program* for occupational schools operates in private schools but they are very few in number. In 2006 there were only three private schools running this program and no public schools (BIC, 2006).

For schools that are not ready to embark on the EP or MEP, they can simply do an 'Intensive English Program' (IEP) or 'English Intensive Program' (EIP). This program teaches English subjects in English and has more English hours with native English teachers (Keyuravong, 2008; BIC, 2006). In IEP or EIP schools, students pay an extra tuition fee because they have a small English class.

English Integrated Studies (EIS)

EIS was developed in 2005 by a school director of Sunthonphu Pittaya Secondary School (SPSS), Rayong Province. Within his rationale for the setting up of the program is the belief that foreign teachers do not normally have adequate background knowledge in teaching and learning based on Thai culture. Moreover, it is not sustainable to employ foreign teachers because there has been a history of a high turn-over. Accordingly, training Thai teachers to teach in English may be a way of overcoming the lack of foreign teachers. Thai teachers were trained to teach particular subjects using English language as a medium of instruction. The three subjects were science, mathematics and computing, instead of using foreign teachers for these purposes as was the case with EP and MEP.

In addition, the cost of EP and MEP were a financial burden for parents in the province, thereby preventing students with low socio-economic status from being able to attend the EP and MEP schools. With the EIS, by contrast, 'the students' parents paid an affordable amount of tuition fee which they had agreed' (Ngamsom, 2006).

The program claimed a successful outcome that students in the EIS project had higher academic results than the normal program and not different from the students of the EP or MEP of schools in Bangkok. After 5 years of operation, over 30 primary and secondary schools in Rayong and Chantaburi provinces have participated in the EIS program (Ngamsom, 2006). With the expansion of the program in 2009, the Bureau of Academic Affairs and Educational Standards of the OBEC, MoE now has stepped in to monitor as well as to assist the expansion of the approach (*personal communication*).



Content and Language Integrated Learning (CLIL)

CLIL in Thailand was the result of an initiative by the British Council in partnership with the Ministry of Education following a conference *Future Perfect – English Language Policy for the New Millennium* in 2006 jointly organized by both organizations (Marsh, Wiriyachitra & Mackenzie, 2008). The focus of CLIL was on the adoption of English as a medium of instruction for subjects other than the language itself.

From April 2006-December 2007, a small scale CLIL project was piloted in six schools in Bangkok. CLIL follows the Thai curriculum of 2001 and teaches Science only in English. The pilot CLIL approach was designed partly to investigate the possibility to transfer some positive features of the EP or MEP across to non-paying students in the Thai-medium stream within a given school (Marsh, Wiriyachitra & Mackenzie, 2008).

Table 4 overleaf summarizes different systems of EBE in Thailand:

Table 4: Types of schools with English as medium of instruction and responsible bodies

Amount of English	Names of programs/schools	Subjects that are taught in English	Types of schools/Responsible bodies
High   Low	International school	all subjects except Thai and social sciences	Private schools / Special Policy School, OPEC
	English Program (EP)	at least 4 core subjects	Government schools / Language Institute, OBEC Private schools / Special Policy School, OPEC BMA schools / Bangkok Metropolitan Administration Demonstration schools / universities with Faculty of Education Multilingual schools / Office of Upper Secondary School Administration, OBEC (developing)
	Mini English Program (MEP)	at least 2 core subjects	Only Government schools / Language Institute, OBEC
	Content and Language integrated learning (CLIL)	Math and Science	Government schools / Language Institute, OBEC
	English Integrated studies (EIS)	Math, Science and Computer	Government and Private schools / Bureau of Academic Affairs and Educational Standard, OBEC
	English Intensive Program (EI)	only English subjects	Government and Private schools / Language Institute, OBEC

* OPEC = Office of Private Education Commission

* OBEC = Office of Basic Education Commission

* BMA = Bangkok Metropolitan Administration

With the global impact of the economic recession in 2008, the government sees the need to strengthen the country in all aspects in order to increase jobs and income for the Thai people through investments from the government as well as to create an opportunity for the private

sector in investment. As a result, more EBE programs are on the ways to serve different needs of people across the nation.

What factors are taken into account when deciding to embark on an EBE-type program?

The MoE issued guidelines for the management of EP programs in 2001 (BEID, 2001). These guidelines are for schools at all levels including occupational schools, and applied both for public and private schools around the country. They are summarized as follows:

- *Objective of the school:* Schools identify the objective of the setting up of the schools.
- *School regulation:* Schools issue regulations identifying qualifications of students to be accepted into the program, and requirement for acceptance.
- *Curriculum:* Schools provide information on types of programs to open and curriculum both in Thai and English including lesson plans, activity plans, and timetable. The curriculum has to follow the Thai basic education curriculum of B.E. 2544 (A.D. 2001) of OBEC, MoE.
- *Teachers and Qualifications:* Schools must have both Thai and foreign teachers. Their qualifications include a bachelor degree in the subject(s) that they are teaching. Non-native teachers should have good pronunciation of English and be able to speak Thai fluently in order to communicate with staff and other teachers; they must have the minimum score of TOEFL 5.5, IELTS 5.5, TOEIC 600 or other from a Ministry of Education approved institute.
- *Salary & employment:* There should be a scheme for the salary of teachers and other staff, rules and regulations for employing teachers and other staff, and a plan for recruitment of teachers for 3-5 years.
- *Acceptance into the program:* There should be a plan for accepting students into the program. Schools should work on 3-6 year plans for the numbers of students that schools will be able to accept.
- *Tuition fee:* Schools should have a plan for the tuition fee which would vary as appropriate according to different programs and levels. Schools should also allocate a budget to support students who are capable but who have low economic status. 3% of the tuition fee from other students will be allocated for such students.
- *Resources for learning:* Schools have information on the following resources - at least 10 sets of Thai textbooks in the library reflecting the MOE curriculum. They should provide resource documents, exercise books, or additional books in English for all subjects in appropriate number and curriculum oriented. Schools should have a list of appropriate

Thai and English books. They should provide material, teaching and learning media in a variety of modern forms which suit the learning content.

- *School building and laboratory accommodation*: Schools should provide classrooms and laboratories for students, according to the standard of the MoE.

What are the objectives of the policy/EBE-type program?

The MoE's aims for English Program schools are to develop the knowledge, capacity and English proficiency of the students so that the students can use English language to meet the needs of internationalization, while maintaining Thai ethics and morality which remain an essential part in the curriculum, as in the Thai program (BEID, 2005). The program also has an aim to improve students' English proficiency, and their confidence in using English to communicate in their daily lives, as well as in searching for knowledge. It is hoped for students to develop their thinking, analysing, and problem solving skills as well as to have an awareness of themselves, society and the world (OBEC, 2009).

However, in reality these are not the only reasons for the establishment of such a program. Many schools use the EP for a commercial purpose, as illustrated in naming the program differently to attract potential customers – e.g. *International Program*, *Bilingual Program*, *Immersion Program*. Even if schools do not have the capacity to operate EP or MEP, they go for the least they can do which is opening up an EIP, or *English Intensive Program*, which teaches English subjects in English by foreign or native-speaker of English teachers.

How can one tell whether or not the objectives are being met?

The English proficiency of the students can be investigated from the outcomes at the end of the semester. Apart from that, a judgment can be made from the English language activities organized by the MoE, and schools such as English Camps, Speech Contest, Debate Contest, as well as English Plays. These events have been organized more frequently since the EBE programs have flourished. 80% of 63 schools were reported to send their students to one of these events, and about 8% send their students to compete internationally (BIC, 2006). As a result, it is now the case that the students both in the Thai and EP programs have more opportunity to exhibit their English language proficiency. Given the massive exposure to English which students in the EP receive, it is not surprising that their English ability is good.

However, there is doubt whether student's ability in English in subject areas such as Mathematics and Science is good. Even though there has been much research in the EP by many parties such as departments and bureaus of the OPEC and OBEC of the MoE itself, ONESQA (Office for National Education Standard and Quality Assessment) and graduate students, there has not been any study that looked at both the students' ability in English and knowledge in the subject areas together. Indeed, a few years ago there was a criticism in Thailand of students in EBE programs doing better in English but worse in mathematics (Watson Todd, 2001).

Are there any national or local systems in place for monitoring?

The MoE indicated in the '*Policy, Principles and Process of Teaching and Learning's Management of Ministry of Education's Curriculum in English*' that the English Program must be systematically supervised, monitored and assessed at regular intervals, in order to continuously deal with any problems which arise and to improve the quality of instruction (BEID, 2001).

The aspects of evaluation should cover the management and the operation of the program, and the quality of teaching and learning outcomes. Research should be done at regular intervals to investigate those aspects to improve the learning outcomes of students, the quality of teachers and the efficiency of the management, while also reducing expenditure (BIC, 2006; OBEC, 2009).

Under the MoE's policy, evaluation has taken place at two levels (national level and school level) by three organizations:

- The *Office for National Education Standards and Quality Assessment (ONESQA)* – ONESQA which is an external and neutral body of educational assessors. This organization evaluates schools by looking at administration, academic issues, management of learning and facilities (including the Thai program as well as the English Program). They evaluate schools as passing or failing against the standards set by the ONESQA (ONESQA, accessed 2010).
- The *Ministry of Education* – MoE evaluates a global picture of the program by outsourcing the evaluation to higher education institutions possessing a highly qualified research profile. MoE also investigates and monitor the teaching which is done by a Supervisory Unit in each Educational Region established around the country.
- *Schools* – Schools do an evaluation of the EP regularly by investigating their students' learning by taking account of the grades which they obtain, and by checking the attitudes and opinions of teachers and students as well as of parents (OPEC, 2009).

Are there any obstacles in the implementation of the program?

The difficulty in finding qualified and dedicated teachers both Thai and foreign to employ is the main obstacle in the implementation of the program. Thai teachers are normally recruited from within the schools. They are given extra compensation for teaching in the EP. However, most foreign teachers are newly recruited (BEID, 2005).

The BEID (2001) stipulates that Thai and foreign teachers' qualifications should be based on specific considerations. All teachers must have at least a bachelor's degree and have evidence of teacher education in the field in which they are going to teach, or in a related field. They must understand the psychology of young learners and the management of learning, be able to provide evidence of teacher education at not less than 15 credits, or have passed training in teaching or education from

institutions that the MOE has accredited. If they do not meet these criteria, teachers have to join a training program within 1 year of their application.

Foreign teachers who are not native speaker of English must pass the TOEFL score of 550 and 5.5 for IELTS. At pre-school and primary levels, they must be able to pronounce English words correctly like native speakers, and must be able to communicate in simple Thai, or have a Thai teacher who can communicate in English in the class all lessons. They must undergo a training course about Thailand and the Thai language and culture of not less than 15 hours, and they must minimally sign a one-year academic contract.

However, ONESQA (2005), BEID (2003), Chinkumtornwong (2005), Noisakul (2006), Nonthapak (2004), Supsuwan (2007) report the problems of teachers such as being unqualified, lack of stable or constant participation, and cultural problems. These can be a hindrance for the effective implementation of the program.

Another obstacle hindering EBE programs from operating successfully, as reported by BIC (2006), is that not enough good students apply for studying in the program. This is due to the fact that the parents were concerned about the further education of their children after graduation from the program. Apart from that, competition among EBE schools is substantial. Large and famous schools have the advantage of attracting good students to their program. Once all the good students have been chosen, the weak students who did not meet the criteria will go to small schools. Some students do not go through the selection process as other students do but use the influence of their parents to gain a place. If the students are weak, they will not be able to catch up with their peers (BIC, 2006).

How are methods and materials chosen for EBE-type programs?

The BEID and MoE require schools to organize learning following the Thai curriculum B.E. 2544 (2001) which is intended to be integrated with internationalization, focusing on the love of the local country and Thainess (BEID, 2001). Each subject should be integrated with morals and ethics and building confidence in using English for communication. In the earlier stages of education, schools should focus first on the ability to communicate in the mother tongue. English activities should be easy, fun, and should create enthusiasm (BIC, 2006).

OBEC (2009) suggests schools should use a student-centered approach to ensure the success of the program. The approach should use different techniques such as project-based learning, learning and teaching that focuses on actual practice, and self-study. In addition, schools should organize extra-curricular activities such as English camps, computer camps, field trips which make use of internal and external learning resources.

As for materials used for instruction, there are no standard materials to use or which are required by the MoE, the only requirement being that schools provide additional reading materials as well as ICT materials in all subjects that are taught in English appropriate to the content in the curriculum. As a result, schools have taken their own initiative in handling their teaching materials (BIC, 2006), such as Thai and foreign teachers cooperating to compile materials from different books in Thailand and abroad, and schools buying books from the publishers or buying books directly from schools in other countries such as from Singapore, Malaysia and the UK.

Is there a budget for this policy?

The MoE allows schools to collect the tuition fees of the students who want this special type of education. The EP or MEP programs should cost not more than 35,000 baht (\$US 1,000) for a semester for EP and half for MEP (BIC, 2006). For EBE program in private schools, the fees are sometimes higher than for the public schools.

The government normally supports schools with EP by making available about 10,000 baht (\$US 320) for one semester (BIC, 2006). However, the administrators at the policy level within the MoE stated that it may not be appropriate for schools which operate an EBE program to receive financial support from the government, since schools receive tuition fee from the students in the program (BIC, 2006).

Who teaches? Local teachers or native speakers of English?

The MoE's regulations (BEID, 2005) require the *English Program* to have both Thai and qualified foreign teachers. Different systems manage teachers differently. EBE programs in public schools such as EP and MEP rely heavily on foreign teachers to teach subjects with Thai teachers, to co-teach or team-teach. Bax's 2009 study reports three models of teaching by foreign and Thai teachers at primary and secondary level:

Model 1: The subject teacher teaches in English, with a Thai teacher giving input in Thai at the same time, or at an appropriate opportunity.

Model 2: The subject teacher teaches in English, with a Thai teacher giving input in Thai with less simultaneous use of Thai, but still appeared to be effective in its outcomes.

Model 3: The English-speaking content teacher who might know little or no Thai teaches alone with good use of visual aids, excellent worksheets and materials

Other EBE programs such as EIS and CLIL involved Thai teachers as mainstream teachers. They are trained to use English to teach subjects such as math and science and foreign teachers have no

roles. For CLIL, Thai teachers were trained on how to plan lesson considering both content and English language (Marsh, Wiriyaichitra & Mackenzie, 2008).

Do teachers of mathematics and science receive any special training or support so as to be able to teach their subject in/through English? If so, what does this training or support consist of?

The MoE's regulations (OBEC, 2009) mention the need for EBE teachers to be trained, especially foreign teachers who need to be trained in the topic of education, if they have not come from the field of education. Research (OBEC, 2009) revealed that more than 50% of foreign teachers had not graduated in education. That is, even though there were many foreign teachers applying, they were not qualified. As a result, schools had to employ those with the best qualifications and then provide them with in-service training.

The topics for training include knowledge about the Thai basic curriculum of English, teaching methodology and assessment, psychology of learning, and Thai culture and institutional culture (only available for foreign teachers). (Keyuravong, 2008):

The program that is known to provide extensive training of teachers in EBE is the EIS program. This teaches mathematics, science and computing in English using Thai mainstream teachers. The content of training includes three topics: English language, the EIS curriculum and the practicum. For English, the teachers learn general English for communication, classroom English, and English in science and mathematics. For the EIS curriculum, the teachers must familiarize themselves with the curriculum and after these two topics of training; the teachers will have a practicum (Ngamsom, 2006).

How desirable do you think the present way of implementing EBE? Please give your opinion as to the strength and weaknesses of EBE as it is implemented at present?

There are different views on the degree of desirability. Some people think that it is highly desirable because the students become more competent and confident, as is evidenced in improved scores in the national examinations, and also in the students' impressive performance in various contests such as public speaking, English plays and debates, organized around the country.

However, some scholars think that it is highly undesirable because most current EBE (at least in the private sector) is profit-driven. There may be a concern to maintain a certain quality to keep future enrolments high, but as long as finance governs educational decision-making, results may not be particularly good.

Strengths of EBE in Thailand

Research evidence suggests that strengths have been shown in the following areas:

Students

Reports have shown favourable characteristics of the students in the *English Program*. Compared to students in the normal Thai program, students in the EP have favourable characteristics and favourable learning results as follows (ONESQA, 2009; BEID, 2003): Students in the EBE programs are more enthusiastic about learning, they practise independent learning, use English in searching for news and knowledge such as reading English newspapers and English novels, and searching for information on websites. They have an opportunity to be exposed to a variety of cultures which results in the ability to adjust to different cultures. Through a student-centred learning approach which is encouraged by this program, they develop high-order thinking skills, confidence, and they show leadership. Their average scores in the EP are 10-20% higher than those in the Thai program. At one private school, 80% of the students in the EP can communicate well in English and 75% can use English to search for knowledge. Besides, many EP students have received awards and scholarships.

Teachers

The BEID (2003) states that Thai teachers have improved their English language proficiency as well as their teaching methodology. Also they have a chance to receive training in management as well as academic aspects, thereby contributing to their professional development.

Weaknesses of EBE in Thailand

There are many problems in running the programs, as for example the following:

Students

Knowledge of the subject

Students who do not have sufficient English fluency have difficulties in understanding concepts in the core subjects (e.g. science, mathematics, physics) taught through the medium of English (Chinkumtornwong, 2005). Watson Todd (2001) has a similar idea. He noted the achievement of the students in these programs that they did better at English but worse at science. Also ONESQA (2005) suggested that students in the program should further develop their knowledge and essential skills (according to the curriculum) in mathematics, science, social science, Thai and foreign languages.

English ability

For EP students, they need to have competency to be able to communicate in daily life and have enough language to learn the subject. In terms of the ability to communicate in daily life is doubtful since students do not have regular exposure to English language outside the class.

Test taking

In the EP, students are taught and assessed through the medium of English. However, the National Examination and the University Entrance Examinations are conducted in the Thai language. Students in the EP are at a disadvantage since they are not properly prepared for the technical demands of taking these tests (Chinkumtornwong, 2005).

Tension between EP students and Thai-medium programs

Some schools tend to focus their attention on the EP, and as a result their two programs are run on a double standard (Chinkumtornwong, 2005). There have been reports of conflict between students in the two different programs. Since EP students pay higher tuition fees, they are treated better and receive more privileges such as having small class sizes and better facilities.

Problem of self-adjustment

The non-English-skill students must have more attempts to study especially the case that the students start to attend the English program in their higher level. Accordingly, it can cause the problem of self-adjustment to compete with their classmates who have already been used to the English teaching (Supsuwan, 2007).

Teachers

ONESQA (2005), BEID (2003), Chinkumtornwong (2005), Noisakul (2006), Nonthapak (2004), Supsuwan (2007) report the problems about teachers as follows:

Unqualified teachers

A number of foreign teachers do not gain a degree in Education, so their performance in teaching may possibly be below standard. Moreover, some foreigners with only basic English skills have been able to buy counterfeit certificates and diplomas to apply for jobs at local English language schools. Since the salaries offered are low compared to international schools, many schools ended up employing foreign teachers (e.g. the tourists) who do not have the qualifications as stated in the MOE guidelines.

For Thai teachers, if they are normal school subject teachers, their English ability is not at the level at which they can give instruction in English effectively. However, some schools invite teachers from universities who are more capable to hold an English class, but this is rare.

The report by the BEID (2003) reveals that the problems of foreign teachers are their knowledge, their personality, and their dedication.

Foreign teachers' lack of stable and constant participation

Some foreign teachers are selected from tourists visiting in the short term. Others may be foreign-graduated students who desire to have a new experience abroad, which is not a long-term prospect either.

Cultural problem

Foreign teachers do not understand the global picture of the standard of Thai education and the Thai evaluation system. Teaching styles of Thai and foreign teachers are different. Thai teachers are not able to adjust their teaching methodology to be in line with that of the foreign teachers. This has caused students to be confused.

Schools

Commercialized education

Some schools set up their program for profit-making rather than educational purposes, and overlooked criteria essential to make the program successful. For example, some made their priority to choose students who can afford to pay, regardless of their fluency. This can have an effect on the learning and teaching because weak students may hold back the whole class and need to have remedial tutoring in both content subjects in Thai at the end of the day, in order to catch up.

Interviews: EBE possible future directions

Do you consider that some form of Bilingual Education would be good for Thailand to develop further over the next few years beyond its present position? Can you please give reasons for your answer?

Some schools enjoy the success of running an EBE program and have students lining up for application. As a result they are able to choose good students for the program, and this ensures more success of the program.

However, many research studies have revealed problems in operating the program due to unqualified teachers and limited resources. Some schools do not have enough students to run the program, because the parents are not confident about the level of quality which the program can offer (BIC, 2006). They are willing to pay more to get their children to better schools.

Learning from the successful experience, one can be optimistic that the EBE programs have potential in developing students to become competent in English in everyday communication.

However, knowledge in the subjects is still a question which should be further investigated in a more detail.

Thailand has embarked on many systems of EBE and a few more systems are going to be implemented in the near future (MoE, 2009), and even within one system itself, they are different. These differences can be optimistically viewed as a positive feature, for they offer flexibility to schools with differing contexts. For example, schools with limited resources upcountry may opt for an *Intensive English Program* (EIP) whereas rich schools can opt for full scale EP. So it maybe impossible to say which one form of EBE is good for Thailand to develop further, and it makes more sense to argue that the program overall should be flexible to fit the context of each school. However, what system or form the schools adopt, they should make sure that they have qualified teachers.

If so, on what scale and in what directions do you consider it might/should develop?

It is more important that good foundations are established across all levels and contexts of education, rather than added value should be increased at certain institutions that already have advantages. However, if the EBE programs are to be implemented, strict criteria for schools have to be endorsed to ensure success. Only schools that are ready in terms of facilities, personnel, teachers, and finance, should be allowed to implement the program. Along with that, schools should be regularly monitored for improvement.

In order to give it the best chance of success, what steps would need to be taken? What priorities would need to be addressed? What conditions would need to be met?

The main challenge in the implementation of EBE in Thailand has always been teacher supply and quality. There are not enough qualified foreign teachers around, so the MoE may have to do more serious teacher training or set a high requirement for schools to apply to open an EP program, to prevent schools from implementing the program that are not ready to do so.

Do you have a view as to how the costs of any future development might be met?

The cost should be borne by the parents since the government has to take care of all the basic education for everybody. However, some funds should be established for students who have potential but are less privileged.

Conclusions

With the emerging of an ASEAN community in the near future, advances in technology in the information age, and with Thailand becoming globalised, Thailand cannot avoid internationalization. English is here to stay as a *lingua franca* of international communication, research, education and business transaction. So the government might have to think seriously about how to make EBE sustainable.

The embarking of Thailand on the EBE programs currently enjoys both success and failure. There are many responsible bodies to oversee the programs. One positive way of looking at it is that we have varieties and this allows flexibility and creativity in the overall system. Those schools that are not ready to embark on the full bilingual program can invest in the level with which that they are comfortable, waiting for the time when they are ready to embark fully on the mission.

However, sometimes too much variety of provision can overshadow the standard of education. Since this deals with education of our younger generation, we cannot run the risk of providing inadequate education for our children. From several studies reviewed, there are some serious problems that need to be tackled, one of which is the quality of teachers, both foreign and local teachers.

With the main challenge of the EBE program being the teacher, the MoE should consider solving this problem both in the short term and in the long run. For a short-term solution, the MoE should have strict criteria in recruiting teachers, and teacher training should be done regularly with assistance from universities around the country. For a longer-term solution, the MoE should think about making the EBE programs sustainable for the country, for example by inviting universities to offer a course in English training for content area teachers so that they can teach science, mathematics, or computing and other courses in English.

Universities may be one of the resources that the schools with EBE program can turn to for assistance. So universities will require quite a lot of training and professional development in order to be in a good position for delivering training to schools. As a result, the further participation of Thai universities in international EBE research and development networks would be useful.

The government's policy of *Education for All* might not be valid when taking EBE programs into consideration. We probably have to consider ways of reaching out to students who are intellectually capable but not financially so. The government's attempt for less privileged students to have access to EBE program, as appeared in the policy document (October 9th, 2001), might not be enough. Maybe the government can allocate some funds to support a group of less privileged but able students.

Regarding the students' academic ability, many research studies have been conducted to evaluate the effectiveness of EBE programs. However, this has only been limited to the proficiency in English. Much research has revealed favorable results in students' proficiency and confidence

when using English. This is of no surprise since the more the students are exposed to and have opportunities to use the target language, the more fluent and competent they will become. However, there has been no major study focusing on the students' knowledge of important subject content areas. Perhaps research should be done to evaluate the students' knowledge of the content, making comparisons among existing EBE systems and comparing EBE to different, non-EBE approaches.

EBE offers a bright prospect for Thailand, so it is essential for all parties concerned to join hands to work on turning this bright prospect into a proven success.

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BIODATA

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At an international level, apart from being an editor of ELTeCS East Asia, she coordinates the US-based educational network (iEARN) to encourage Thai students to do online collaborating projects with students from other countries.

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Learning through English: Chapter 5

Insights from VIETNAM

To Thi Thu Huong

Until 1998, when a pilot project involving the teaching of Maths and Science through English at Grade 1 started in Ho Chi Minh City, the concept of English Bilingual Education (EBE) was little known in Vietnam. Now, the idea is more often known and discussed under the term Content-Based-Instruction (CBI) or Content and Language Integrated Learning (CLIL). Using the six EBE models identified by Johnstone (2007a) as an analytical framework, the commonly found models of EBE in today's Vietnam are: early partial immersion; delayed partial immersion; and late partial immersion.

There have been very few published studies on EBE in Vietnam, except some unpublished Master and PhD theses and some articles. This chapter, therefore, sets the scene by presenting the historical, cultural and socio-linguistic context, the status of the English language, English language teaching and learning in Vietnam, then reviews some available papers on CBI, then describes the current policies on EBE in the country, and finally draws some tentative conclusions.

Historical, cultural and sociolinguistic context

For thousands of years, the official names of the country (*from Vietnam National Administration of Tourism Website*) have evolved from:

- Van Lang (2876 BC – 258 BC)
- Au Lac (257 BC – 207 BC)
- Van Xuan (544-602)
- Dai Co Viet (968 – 1054)
- Dai Viet (1054 – 1802)
- Dai Ngu (1400 – 1406)
- Viet Nam (1804-1820)
- Dai Nam (1820-1840)

to the current official name of **The Socialist Republic of Vietnam** or **Vietnam** for short.

The Socialist Republic of Vietnam is the easternmost country on the Indochina Peninsula in Southeast Asia. The country is bordered by China to the north, Laos to the northwest, Cambodia to

the southwest, and the South Sea, to the east.

With a population of over 86 million, Vietnam is the 13th most populous country in the world (Wikipedia). The national capital is Hanoi, situated in the Red River Delta in the North.

Being a strip of land with the shape of a letter “S” on the eastern part of the Indochinese peninsula, the country’s total length from north to south is 1,650km. Its east to west width is 600km at the widest point in the north, 400km in the south, and 50km at the narrowest part, in the centre (Quang Binh Province). The coastline is 3,260km long and the inland border is 4,510km. As such, Vietnam is a transport junction from the Indian Ocean to the Pacific Ocean.

In terms of climate, Vietnam lies in the tropics and monsoon area with strong torrential rain, a considerable amount of sun, a high rate of rainfall, and high humidity. The parts of the country located near the tropics and in the mountainous regions are endowed with a temperate climate. Three quarters of Vietnam’s territory consist of mountains and hills (Vietnam National Administration of Tourism Website).

Cultural characteristics

Regarding cultural characteristics, it has been well documented that South East Asian (SEA) societies are highly collective, and display high power distance (Hofstede, 1980, 1986). Being a SEA nation, Vietnamese people share the same cultural characteristics of high collectivism and high power distance. These characteristics shape Vietnamese students’ typical attitude to knowledge and authority and their beliefs about teaching and learning styles (To, 2000).

In any cultures and societies, there are attitudes to knowledge that emphasise its conservation or extension (Ballard & Clanchy, 1991). These attitudes form a continuum and vary within cultures and even within individuals in a specific culture. Yet, there are marked tendencies between cultures in their attitudes to knowledge, to authority, to teaching-learning styles. Vietnamese attitudes to knowledge seem to fall somewhere closer to the conserving end of the continuum. These attitudes lead to corresponding expectations on the roles of teacher and students, to differing teaching and learning activities in comparison with the ones corresponding to the extending end.

At the conserving end of the attitude to the knowledge continuum, the prevailing attitude is respect for written information and authoritative texts. Teachers and authority in the fields are ‘gurus’ (Thijs 1996: 46), and not to be contradicted. They are expected to transmit necessary knowledge to the students and act as an overt model of morality and wisdom. Students should try to follow their teachers as closely as possible and try to achieve correctness in their work.

At the extending end, students are encouraged to extend existing knowledge, to try to look at available theory, data and techniques from different perspectives, and demonstrate their new approach in independent research and writing. Teachers only act as advisers or patrons.

Vietnamese people in general, Vietnamese students in particular, possess several special characteristics inherited from many generations. Living in the tropical zone with frequent floods, storms, and many unexpected natural calamities, going through almost successive wars, Vietnamese people have established in themselves a strong feature of adaptability, of difficulties and hardship endurance. The corollary of this is perseverance and a considerable work ethic (Phan & Vu, 1996).

The influence of the two nearby cultures of China and India has resulted in a conserving attitude towards knowledge (Ballard & Clanchy, 1991) in contrast to an extending attitude typical of English speaking people. This is one of the sources of difficulties for Vietnamese students when they study in English speaking countries or at English-medium institutions elsewhere or even in Vietnam. They may have difficulty in writing essays or theses to the standards required by English-medium institutions as they may refrain from giving their critical evaluation of leading scholars in the field. They may find it difficult to be autonomous in their academic study, especially in the first few months.

Ethnicity and languages

The current official language in Vietnam is Vietnamese, the language of the Kinh or Viet people.

In terms of ethnic groups, currently, there are 54 different groups in Vietnam, with the Kinh (Viet) people making up nearly 90% of the whole population, and 53 other ethnic groups representing more than 10%. These 54 groups are classified into 8 language groups:

- *The Viet - Muong Group includes 4 ethnic groups: Chut, Kinh, Muong, Tho.*
- *The Tay - Thai Group includes 8 ethnic groups: Bo Y, Giay, Lao, Lu, Nung, San Chay, Tay, Thai.*
- *The Mon - Khmer Group includes 21 ethnic groups: Ba Na, Brau, Bru-Van Kieu, Cho Ro, Co, Co Ho, Co Tu, Gie Trieng, Hre, Khang, Khmer, Kho Mu, Ma, Mang, M'nonng, O Du, Ro Mam, Ta Oi, Xinh Mun, Xo Dang, Xtieng.*
- *The Mong - Dao Group includes 3 groups: Dao, Mong, Pa Then.*
- *The Kadai Group includes 4 ethnic groups: Co Lao, La Chi, La Ha, Pu Peo.*
- *The Nam Dao Group includes 5 ethnic groups: Cham, Chu Ru, Ede, Gia Rai, Raglai.*
- *The Han Group includes 3 ethnic groups: Hoa, Ngai, San Diu.*
- *The Tang Group includes 6 ethnic groups: Cong, Ha Nhi, La Hu, Lo Lo, Phu La, Si La (Vietnam National Administration of Tourism).*

Also according to the Vietnam National Administration of Tourism Website:

Among the 54 Vietnamese ethnic groups some have had their own scripts for a long time and some have not preserved their ancient scripts. Some ethnic groups consisting of some hundreds of individuals living in remote areas have their own languages. Throughout the

years, these languages have been enriched in terms of vocabulary, precision, and expression. However, the Viet language is most commonly used.

In terms of script, for a long time under northern domination, han (Chinese) was widely used in trade, education and state documents. This lasted until the beginning of 20th century. During the eighth century, parallel to the use of han, the Vietnamese created the nom script, which used the pictography of han to note the sounds of the Viet language. The appearance of the nom script marked a point of maturity in the national conscious of the Viet, and led to the development of literature in Vietnam.

In the 16th century, quoc ngu (a Romanized script produced by French missionaries) appeared and was substituted for both the han and nom scripts.

In present day Vietnam, the French language, a colonial legacy, is still spoken by some elderly Vietnamese as a second language, but is losing its popularity. Vietnam, however, remains a full member of *La Francophonie*. Russian — and to a much lesser extent German, Czech, or Polish — is still used by people having ties with the former Soviet bloc. In recent years, English is becoming more popular as a second language with more than 90% students selecting it for a foreign language at secondary level. Chinese, Japanese and Korean have also become more popular (from Wikipedia).

Globalisation and ideology

The growing popularity of English in present-day Vietnam is believed, to some extent, to be related to globalisation. Globalisation has, directly and indirectly, made both positive and negative impacts on social relations, ideology and culture in Vietnam. Directly, together with economic integration into the world economy, the non-Marxist ideologies and cultures from different countries have been brought into Vietnam. Indirectly, the “world economy affects the Vietnamese economy and the Vietnamese economy influences social relations, ideology and culture in the country” (VOV News 2006). VOV News (2006) believed that:

There have been drastic changes in class relationships in Vietnam since the country carried out the open-door policy to boost international integration, develop a multi-sectoral economy and attract foreign investment. However, the polarization between the rich and the poor and the gap in incomes and living standards are increasingly on the rise and seen in every aspect between rural and urban areas, plain and mountainous areas, workers and farmers, between workers at domestic and foreign-owned enterprises, between workers at State-owned and private enterprises, and between enterprise employers and employees... In terms of positive impact, thanks to broadened international exchanges, the Vietnamese people have further understanding of capitalism, including its positive sides and unresolved contradictions. However, pragmatism has arisen from many people due to the impacts of economic globalization and the development of the market economy. These impacts, along with negative social phenomena, have made some people who did

not learn Marxism-Leninism systemically and failed to grasp its scientific and revolutionary natures reduce their trust in Marxism-Leninism and the ideals of socialism and communism...

Meanwhile, in the international integration process, Vietnamese culture has received new values of the world culture and become increasingly diverse and richer. In any era, closed development will indispensably become infertile.

Nevertheless, globalization also has negative impacts on Vietnamese culture as a segment of young people are at risk of ignoring traditional cultural values. In addition, some traditional cultural values have not been preserved and even traded for profits while spiritual values have deformed or sunk into oblivion (VOV News, 2006)

Recently, the mass media in Vietnam have reported concerns about young Vietnamese behaving in too westernized ways or using too much English at the cost of their mother tongue, Vietnamese (VnExpress, 2010).

Status of the English language in Vietnam

The English language did not gain an important position in Vietnam until the introduction of the Economic Renovation and the 'open door' policy (referring to the country's policy of opening up to the outside world, mostly in terms of foreign investment and the global market) in the late 1980s. English was then chosen to be the language for international communication. After Vietnam became a member of the Association of South East Asian Nations (ASEAN) and recently, the World Trade Organization (WTO), the English language has an even more important role to play in the country's political, economic, cultural and social arenas, as English is considered to be the official working language among the ASEAN nations. According to Vu (1997):

The recognition of English as ... the most important foreign language is reflected in the removal in the early 1990s of a restraint previously imposed on secondary and tertiary education institutions to teach a more or less balanced number of students in each of the four officially recognised foreign languages - English, French, Russian, and German. Students are now free to choose any of the foreign languages offered in the curriculum. The ... result of this removal of the 'foreign language quota' is that there has been an overwhelming rise in the number of students choosing to learn English to complete the compulsory foreign language component in the curriculum (Vu, 1997: 11).

Ten years later, this observation is still valid and further supported by Nguyen Loc (2007) and Nguyen Ho Thuy Anh (2007) in their presentation at the Primary Innovation Regional Seminar in Hanoi in March 2007.

After Vietnam began its open door policy in the mid 1980s, the demand for English increased greatly in all aspects. This created a favourable attitude towards, and a strong motivation to learn, English among Vietnamese, especially the young.

English language teaching and learning in Vietnam

The formal system

The Vietnamese education system is divided into:

- Primary education from year 1 to year 5
- Lower secondary education from year 6 to year 9
- Upper secondary education from year 10 to year 12
- Higher education, and
- Postgraduate education.

Before 1998, from lower secondary onwards, a foreign language was compulsory, with English being the preferred language. From 1998 up to now, English is an optional subject in primary education. According to Nguyen Loc (2007), at *'day-schools, English is taught to students from grade 3, with the time allocation of two periods per week'* and in 2007, *'approximately 32.2% of the primary schools in Vietnam are implementing this program.'* In big cities such as Ho Chi Minh City, a pilot English intensive program of eight periods per week is being implemented for students from primary schools to upper secondary schools (grade 1 to grade 12).

With more open door policies, many foreign owned/invested or private educational institutions have recently appeared in Vietnam, mostly in Hanoi and Ho Chi Minh City, many of which offer EBE from pre-school to university levels. Examples are O'Hana Pre-school, Doan Thi Diem Primary School, International School, Newton Grammar School, RMIT in Hanoi; Vietnam-German University, Vietnam-Australian International School; FasTrackKids, a Canadian-owned pre-school in Ho Chi Minh City.

At tertiary level, there are many institutions offering English language programs such as the Hanoi Foreign Language College (now renamed University of Languages and International Studies) under the Vietnam National University, the Hanoi Foreign Studies University (now called the Hanoi University), the Hanoi Teachers' Training College, the Hanoi University of Education, the University of Ho Chi Minh City, the University of Hue, the University of Da Nang, the University of Da Lat and many Medical Colleges, Foreign Trade Colleges and International Relations Institutes throughout the country. However, these programs can be grouped into English majors and English non-majors.

English major undergraduate students study approximately 1000 hours of English subjects including integrated English language skills, literature, linguistics, interpreting/translation, and

Western culture studies. English non-major undergraduate students study about 300 hours of English to upgrade their general English proficiency and academic reading skills in their specialised areas.

The informal system

Besides the English language programmes within the formal system, there is the informal system offering English language training in the form of continuing education, which includes Foreign Language Centres. The curriculum, consisting of Level A, B and C courses, or Elementary, Intermediate and Advanced levels, is aimed at people who have already left the basic education system. It is this group that needs English for their work in the Government of Vietnam organisations or with foreign-linked bodies. The four macro skills of speaking, listening, reading and writing are to be developed as well as English grammar, text structures, phonology, vocabulary and culture.

Among the three levels, level C emphasises fluency, beyond that students can pursue ESP. At all levels, practical use of English rather than theory of English is intended to be emphasised. However, the context of English learning and teaching in Vietnam is still a foreign one as English is, in fact, a foreign language in Vietnam. Reading and Writing skills are emphasized as a result of the high value attached to literacy. Lack of natural and authentic interaction with native speakers of English leaves students and teachers a few hours of listening to taped spoken English and speaking to one another in English each week during class time.

Exposure to and use of English in society

From 1995, TV and radio programs in English appeared, but still speakers were Vietnamese. After the implementation of the economic renovation in Vietnam, more opportunities for interaction with native speakers of English became open to Vietnamese learners of English. However, the ability to communicate in spoken English of an average Vietnamese is still limited.

According to the Vietnam News (2008):

A sample survey on English language skills among graduates conducted in universities that do not major in languages found more than half, 51.7 per cent, did not use English for research and communication purposes... There are 59 such universities in the country. Most students were not able to use the language to study, do research or even to communicate after learning at universities for up to six years...

A recent survey conducted by the Law University in HCM City reported only 1 per cent of its students held an advanced English-language degree. The rest, comprising 44 per cent and 36 per cent are at beginning or primary levels...

Also according to the Undergraduate and Post-graduate Department, many English teachers at universities had low English skills because they did not keep updated and do not meet many native speakers.

Most universities rely on available text books to teach English, such as Headway, Lifeline and Streamline.

Available published papers on EBE in Vietnam

Nguyen Ho Thuy Anh (2007) gave an account of a Pilot Intensive English Programme in Ho Chi Minh City. To meet the pressing need of society for future generations who can use English as a communication tool, in 1998, Ho Chi Minh City (HCMC) Authority allowed the Department of Education and Training (DOET) to pilot an intensive English program in Ho Chi Minh City for teaching and learning English at grade 1 with 8 periods (a period lasts 35 minutes) per week. At the start in 1998 with 70 students in one school (District 1), the programme, by 2007, had over 23,000 students in 113 schools in 24 districts. This programme aims at teaching Maths and Science through English and developing English skills and content through other core subjects which are well received by parents and the broader community. Ms Anh further informed that the needs for EBE at both primary and secondary levels were very great. Recently, out of 18000 students who registered for a place in an EBE class, HCMC DOET can accommodate only 8000. Lack of trained school teachers for EBE is one of the big obstacles to EBE implementation in HCMC

Nguyen Thi Thu Ha and To Thi Thu Huong (2009) in a paper titled *A Study of EFL Instruction in an Educational Context with Limited Resources* report on Content-Based Instruction (CBI) in reading classes at a university English department. It was found that there was a mismatch between the beliefs of teachers and students and a lack of professional-subject-related topics in the reading programs, as well as faulty design and implementation of the intended curriculum.

Using the distinction that "*approach*" describes theories about the nature of language and language learning "that underlie the principles and practices of language learning and teaching" (Richards & Rodgers 1986:16) while "*method*" refers to the overall practical plan for teaching and learning a language which is based upon a selected approach (To et al. 2007); the two authors hold that content-based instruction (CBI) is a curricular approach or framework, not a method (which involves a syllabus to be used; teaching & learning objectives as well as teaching & learning activities) in that it entails:

- *The view of the nature of language as a tool for communication.*
- *The belief about the nature of language teaching/learning as interactions between language, content, teachers, and learners.*
- *The idea of how these views should be applied to the practice of language teaching (To et al. 2007).*

In contrast to some EFL curricula with focus on learning about language rather than learning to use language for meaningful communication about relevant content, the CBI approach seeks to reach a balance between language and content instruction. In line with this emerging direction, the English program for a Bachelor of Teaching English as a Foreign Language (BA TEFL) at the English Department, College of Foreign Languages, Vietnam National University in Hanoi has been designed on the basis of different general themes such as Education, Health, Environment, Entertainment as theme-based is one variant of CBI (Brown, 2007).

Although designed to be theme-based, until the end of 2008, the English language development program has been implemented in 'segregated-skill' instruction (Oxford, 2001) with separate classes in the four English macro-skills of listening, speaking, reading and writing as often found in the EFL model. There has been anecdotal evidence that newly graduated teachers of English from the Department lack proficiency in the language they are supposed to be qualified to teach. This raised a question on the alignment of the intended/claimed program (CBI) and the implemented one for intended outcomes (good non-native teachers of English with acceptable level of English proficiency). Thus, there appears a real need to empirically explore the beliefs of teachers and students about content-based instruction and the realities of CBI in some English classes at the Department.

In response to this call, a study was conducted at the English Department, College of Foreign Languages, Vietnam National University (hereafter called ED) in 2008. The study was framed specifically to explore ways to enhance EFL instruction (limited to English reading instruction, in order to be manageable) in the constraints of limited resources within the intended CBI framework. The findings revealed that teachers and students of English in limited-resource institutions could exploit their 'location-specific' (Kumaravdivelu, 2001) curriculum concepts and subjects to supplement the limited instructional materials and resource collection along a content-based-instruction approach for optimal results.

The findings also showed that though the curriculum was claimed to be theme-based, a branch of CBI, the implementation of CBI in the reading classroom could still be further improved with better integration of more professional-subject-related topics into the reading programs. In order to ensure the successful handling of CBI at ED, CFL, there are many things to be done regarding teachers, students and the physical conditions, which are in line with issues that Johnstone (2007b) identified earlier. They are:

Recommendations for a more effective implementation approach to the integration of language and content in the BA TEFL curriculum

- Richer and more professional-subject-relevant content to prepare students for their BA TEFL by integrating some introductory content of the subjects in the Professional Knowledge block into the Fundamental Knowledge block, specifically into the Reading program of ED. The themes in the Reading program of ED, currently revolving around general topics of Education, Transportation, etc., need to be made more relevant to the professional subjects of the third and fourth years (ELT Methodology, Pedagogy, Psychology, etc.).

- Integrating content of the Linguistic, Literature and Culture-related subjects into the language classes (covering all the four macro English skills) within the Fundamental Knowledge block.
- Adopting the adjunct model [*'in which language courses are linked with content courses to better integrate the reading, writing, and study skills required of the two disciplines'* (Snow & Brinton, 1984:1)] to optimally prepare students for their learning of the professional subjects as well as preparation for their future career; that is language and content should be integrated using a team design, in which a content course instructor works collaboratively with a language instructor. At ED, a content course instructor could be a lecturer from ELT Methodology/Linguistic/Literature-Cross Culture Communication Divisions (Theory Divisions). A language instructor could be a teacher from English Skills Divisions 1, 2, 3, 4 (Practice Divisions). The best arrangement could be that a lecturer at ED should be able to work at both types of divisions for successful implementation of CBI.
- Providing on-going professional support and development and better teaching conditions for teachers.
- Raising awareness and train students for optimal handling of CBI.

What Teachers Should Do

- Obtain a good knowledge of English language and the subject matter that they integrate in their reading lessons.
- In class, organize discussion focusing on explaining difficult phrases/main ideas/interesting aspects of the teaching materials. To make this activity more effective, the teachers can call some students to form a group which is supposed to answer any question from the audience (in reading passage) or question the audience.
- During the discussion, teachers should encourage students to have more real-life examples related to a difficult view. Help students enhance background knowledge.
 - The advantages of this activity are that it can enhance comprehension; it can give students the chance to discuss to have different views on one idea and by discussing, they can figure out or have a clearer idea of difficult phrases/ideas in the material; it can make students have the feeling that they are not being tested and read actively; and it can improve explanation skill (useful for future teaching).
 - A difficulty of this activity may consist in choosing suitable topics (interesting, updated, not much specialized).

What Students Should Do

- Understand the importance of CBI for their future career or for further study.
- Increase their English vocabulary and proficiency level.
- Read widely in both English and Vietnamese.
- Understand that English should be a tool for acquisition of knowledge.
- Have a good knowledge of the BA TEFL curriculum.

What should be done about the physical conditions

- If classrooms are well equipped and teaching conditions are good.
- If reading materials are really “content based”.
- Vary the themes to include more professional-subject-related topics.

Current policies on EBE in Vietnam

The Government of Vietnam is devoted to developing English language skills on a long-term strategic basis to compete more effectively in international markets and thereby achieve sustainable economic growth. The Prime Minister’s approval of the Ministry of Education and Training’s Project entitled *Teaching and Learning Foreign Languages in the National Education System, Period 2008-2020* reflects this commitment. The project aims to broadly reform the teaching and learning of foreign languages (English language recommended) across the national education system, implementing new curriculums for teaching and learning foreign languages at all sectors and levels. As a result, by 2020, the majority of young Vietnamese, who are high school, college and university graduates, will be able to use English to communicate confidently and be able to study and work in a multi-lingual and multi-cultural environment; thus better enabling young Vietnamese people to contribute to the industrialisation and modernisation of the country. This project also identifies the six levels of the Common European Framework of Reference, issued by the Association of Foreign Language Testing in Europe to be the requirements for competency, capacity in listening, speaking, reading and writing in a foreign language.

The specific goals of the project are:

- To implement a ten-year education program wherein a foreign language is enforced as compulsory for grade school starting grade 3. From 2010 - 2011, implement language teaching in accord with the new curriculum for about 20% of 3rd graders and gradually expand the scale to about 70% in school year 2015 - 2016, aiming to reach 100% in school year 2018 – 2019
- To implement a foreign language enhancement training program for vocational education which targets about 10% of students from different training centers and professional vocation training schools in school year 2010 – 2011, increases to 60% in school year 2015 – 2016 and eventually gets to 100% in school year 2019-2020
- To implement a foreign language enhancement training program for undergraduate education (for both foreign language specialization institutions and normal institutions) which targets about 10% of students from different colleges, universities in school year 2010 – 2011, increases to 60% in school year 2015 – 2016 and eventually reaches 100% in school year 2019 - 2020
- To renovate the tasks of teaching and learning foreign languages within regular education program with content and a training curriculum that are suitable for different learning and

training levels. This aims to contribute positively to the enrichment and upgrading of language capacity for human resources, such as staff and officials; and to perform diversification of studying methods in order to meet learners 'needs

- E. Plan to achieve language level 3 and above for 5% of staff, clerk and officials from governmental agencies by the year 2015 and reaching 30% by the year 2020.

In addition to this project, there are many other policy documents supporting the application of EBE in Vietnam, especially at tertiary level. Two most relevant documents are the Advanced Programs and English language requirements for Master and Doctoral Degrees.

With the goals to reform the higher education system, the Ministry of Education and Training (MOET) has permitted Vietnamese universities and colleges to implement the Advanced Programs, the goal of which is to transplant curricula from particular American programs into counterpart departments in Vietnam. To date, the MOET has given large grants to nine Vietnamese universities to set up ten programs in which specific departments or faculties are intended to adopt the curriculum, courses, materials and teaching styles from their American partner universities. This program, which MOET is set to expand, aims to be an effective way to enhance quality of education in Vietnamese universities. There is, however, almost no discussion on the possible disadvantages such as the risks of diluting Vietnamese culture and traditions at tertiary level while there are many at primary level.

Since late 2005, the first phase of the advanced programs in the disciplines of Sciences, Technology, Business, and Agriculture from high-ranking U.S. universities has been implemented at several Vietnam universities with all instruction in English. Many U.S. universities have agreed to award degrees to Vietnamese students pursuing advanced programmes; many U.S. education institutions agree to support the quality assurance of the training programmes of Vietnam. In late 2007, the 2nd phase with thirteen advanced programs at thirteen Vietnamese universities began. In addition to U.S. higher education institutions, the second phase also has the participation of the U.K. and Australian universities (*U.S. – Vietnam Education Task Force Final Report, 2009*).

In terms of English language requirements, all Master and Doctoral candidates are obliged to obtain an overall IELTS score of 5.0 or above or TOEFL equivalents as a condition for the award of their particular degree by Vietnamese tertiary institutions.

At provincial level, HCMC and Hanoi are the two most active cities to pilot EBE. On 16 March 2010, HCMC started the pilot Cambridge International (EBE) programme with selected sixty-two first graders in Nguyen Binh Khiem Primary School in District 1. This programme is to be expanded to thirty-six schools (from primary to secondary), thirty-one of which are state schools, and the other five are founded by particular individuals. Hanoi is the first city in Vietnam to pilot this programme at Doan Thi Diem and Thai Thinh Primary Schools (*Dan Tri Newspaper, 17 March 2010*).

Interviews with key stakeholders

Prior to the study, in consultation with the BC Vietnam ELT Development Manager, a list of potential interviewees was set up including education policy makers, managers, English language teacher trainers, English teachers and parents of students (primary to postgraduate levels). A letter explaining the purpose of the study, seeking consent to participate and a list of proposed interview questions were sent to all these people via emails and/or correspondence in the last week of January 2010. After the 5 weeks deadline, a total of 10 signed consent forms were received.

As the 10 voluntary interviewees were all very busy and spread all over Vietnam, from Northern to Central and Southern parts of the country, a flexible approach was adopted for interviewing, i.e depending on availability and accessibility of respondents, face-to-face or telephone or email interviews were conducted. The interviews were flexible and responsive in nature. Prior to their interviews, interviewees were invited to fill in a table to answer the suggested interview questions (grouping into three topics as described in Table 2). Five of the ten conducted interviews were supported by and cross-checked with written responses collected via emails. Table 1 summarises information on the interviewees. During the interviews, the research took notes. After the interviews, these notes were presented to interviewees for checking to ensure data accuracy.

Table 1 Interviewees information

No	ID	Position	Location	Interview Mode
1	P1	Policy-maker	Hanoi	Telephone
2	P2	Policy-maker	Ho Chi Minh City	Email + Telephone
3	M1	Education Manager	Hanoi	Email + Face-to-face
4	M2	Education Manager	Da Nang	Telephone
5	TT1	Teacher Trainer	Hanoi	Email + Face-to-face
6	TT2	Teacher Trainer	Hanoi	Email + Face-to-face
7	ET1	English Teacher (secondary & university)	Hanoi	Face-to-face
8	ET2	English Teacher (university)	Singapore	Email
9	P1	Parent (Primary, Secondary students)	Hanoi	Face-to-face
10	P2	Parent (Postgraduate student)	Ho Chi Minh City	Telephone

The qualitative data analysis approach used in the study was termed '*interactive synthesis*' (Huberman & Miles 1994: 436), which combined both case-oriented and variable oriented strategies. Starting with a variable-oriented strategy of '*finding themes* that cut across cases' (Huberman & Miles 1994: 436) to compose a 'general condensation' (Fischer & Wertz 1975; cited in Huberman & Miles 1994: 436) of the data, the study then returned to individual cases for configuration within each case, and performed comparative analysis to arrive at findings for the three interview themes.

Table2 (overleaf) depicts the metamatrix used as a starting frame of reference for data analysis in the study. Key words and phrases extracted from the interviews were then inserted in the corresponding cells for further analysis and eventually, generation of findings.

Table 2 The metamatrix for qualitative data analysis

<i>Themes</i>	<i>Current policies and priorities for education at school in Vietnam</i>	<i>EBE as implemented at present in Vietnam</i>	<i>EBE possible future directions for Vietnam</i>
<i>Cases</i>			
1			
2			
3			
4			
5			
6			
7			
8			
9			
10			

Interview Topic 1: Current policies and priorities for education at school

In Vietnam, policy decisions which affect education at school are taken centrally by the Ministry of Education and Training (MOET) and the corresponding regional level (the Department of Education and Training - DOET and Bureau of Education and Training - BOET). The current policies and priorities for education at school are improving quality of education through renovation of curriculum, textbook, teaching methods, teacher training and development, applying active teaching and learning with the use of ICT and giving priority for English to be taught throughout the levels of the national education system.

Although leaders, teachers and parents are fully aware of the benefits of having a good command of English, a great number of students are not. They think of English just as another subject to

study. Still some of the students see the advantages of developing a good command of English and *'direly need strong English skills to pave the way for a chance to go studying abroad or simply to pursue their other personal interests'* (TT2).

At present, the national policies under the direction of the MOET and DOET together with a set of standard references require that English is taught as an optional subject from grade 3 – 5, and becomes compulsory from grade 6 (TT1). Noticeable provisions are in the form of learning materials and facilities, especially labs to practise English listening skills. It is not successful because the labs are not used very frequently, probably because the amount of time allotted to each study period is too small, given that so many technical (and other) problems may occur in a lab session (TT2).

Interview Topic 2: EBE as implemented at present

In present-day Vietnam, EBE mainly takes place in private or international schools, from primary to secondary (aged 8- 18) with monitoring and supervision from the MOET, DOET and BOET. There are still concerns and debate about the appropriate age to start EBE for optimal results and Vietnamese language maintenance (M1). Factors taken into account when deciding to embark on EBE-type programmes are political will, policy, supporting resources, teacher training and schooling.

The objectives of the policy/EBE-type programmes are to enable learners to develop not only a good command of English and the subjects but also English-related cultural competence and soft skills in order to integrate into the international education and work environments (P1, ET1 & M1).

Obstacles to the implementation of this programme/policy are identified to include:

- Lack of understanding and support from leaders and managers
- Teacher quality and professional competence
- Programme finance
- Programme facilities and equipment
- The English and Vietnamese proficiency levels of the learners

In order to evaluate achievement of the stated objectives, it is advisable to:

- Provide a transparent policy
- Organise an EBE inspection office
- Organise a Quality Accreditation office

At the level of provision, most EBE teachers, both local and native, are experienced teachers who have spent time working or studying abroad using English as the medium of instruction and now they teach their subjects in private or international schools. The methods that they use are varied, and just aim to help their students to develop a good command in both subject areas and English.

Materials in use are mostly from available sources and can be adapted to suit their own teaching contexts.

Funding for current available EBE courses is mainly provided by parents. Monthly costs range from USD 30 to USD 150 for primary and secondary level. At university level, annual fees for a joint EBE programme (co-instructed through the medium of English by foreign and Vietnamese lecturers) range from USD 1000 to USD 22000.

Interview Topic 3: EBE possible future directions

Respondents' ideas on EBE possible future directions appear to fall into two tracks. On the one hand, they feel very enthusiastic and confident about the way forward for EBE given the societal and language factors (Johnstone 2009: 37) such as a strong political will from leaders of the country, parental involvement and the perceived benefits of some form of EBE, as well as influence of the media, business needs for particular languages, amount of out-of-school exposure in Vietnam to the English language. With such supporting factors, they believe that EBE will move very fast in years to come when assistance and joint ventures with the US, UK, Australia, New Zealand and other English-speaking countries will bring about a solid base to facilitate EBE implementation in Vietnam.

On the other hand, some respondents express their reservation about the swift widespread of EBE in Vietnam. To them, for a smooth way forward:

There are three itching and relevant problems that need to be dealt with: 1. Soft skills - related subjects being evaluated in rigid, quantitative terms, 2. Too much leaning towards sciences, given a well-rounded education, and 3. Very low transparency in recruiting teachers for grade 1-12. Grassroots autonomy should very likely be the key to all the next major advancements. The chief decision-makers should be the schools themselves and not the departments or even the Ministry, whose core authority should be restricted to monitoring and evaluation only (TT2, M1).

Conclusions

In Vietnam today, there has been some form of EBE in place either through the official channels of the MOET, DOET and BOET or private providers from pre-school to tertiary levels. In other words, the models of EBE in today's Vietnam are: early partial immersion; delayed partial immersion; and late partial immersion (Johnstone, 2007a).

The current policies and priorities for education at school are improving quality of education through renovation of curriculum, textbook, teaching methods, teacher training and development, applying active teaching and learning with the use of ICT and giving priority for English to be taught throughout the levels of the national education system. The objectives of the policy/EBE-type

programmes are to enable learners to develop not only a good command of English and the subjects but also English-related cultural competence and soft skills in order to integrate into the international education and work environments.

Hindrances to the implementation of this programme/policy include some lack of understanding and support from leaders and managers; teacher quality and professional competence; programme finance; programme facilities and equipment; the English and Vietnamese proficiency levels of the learners, inappropriate curricula emphasizing language knowledge at the cost of language use, insufficient learning time (only three 45-minute lessons per week) and the negative attitudes of most learners (just learn English to pass the exams).

Also, there have been many arguments that introducing EBE at a too early stage, say primary level, may cause some difficulties for Vietnamese language maintenance. Furthermore, the push for EBE at all levels of the national education system may lead to diluting the Vietnamese culture and traditions that are already at risk with the negative impacts of globalization in the country.

Given the societal and language factors (Johnstone 2009: 37) such as a strong political will from leaders of the country, parental involvement and the perceived benefits of some form of EBE, as well as influence of the media, business needs for English in Vietnam, EBE will move very fast in years to come. With such supporting factors, EBE will quickly develop in the future when assistance and joint ventures with the US, UK, Australia, New Zealand and other English-speaking countries will bring about a solid base to facilitate EBE implementation in Vietnam.

Societal, Individual / Small-group factors and Language factors are available for further implementation of EBE. However, other factors needed for EBE success such as Provision and Process factors are still lacking to some extent. Research has shown that the key to a successful education program is the teacher, EBE included. Teacher training for effective EBE should be the number one priority for Vietnam in the endeavour to expand EBE.

More support and assistance from organisations such as the British Council or Fulbright and IDP are needed to move EBE forward in a more efficient and timely way. Such assistance could involve expert advice on language policy development, EBE teacher training, support and professional development as well as development of appropriate context-specific EBE curricula, materials and assessment practice. Another form of support could be joint research on impact of EBE on various age groups in Vietnam, on appropriate models of EBE for the country, on monitoring and evaluation of implemented EBE programmes in Vietnam.

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BIODATA

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Learning through English: Chapter 6

SYNTHESIS & IMPLICATIONS

Richard Johnstone

This concluding chapter addresses three topics: a) additional research studies, mainly from a wider range of East Asian countries, which have some relevance to our theme; b) a second look at the system of factors and outcomes which was set out in initial form in the introductory chapter but this time influenced by insights from East Asia which have been gained through the present volume; and c) a final consideration of Policies, Challenges and Prospects.

ADDITIONAL EAST ASIAN RESEARCH STUDIES

These additional research studies are grouped under three headings:

- Societal impact of English
- Majority/minority issues
- Curriculum and pedagogy

All three headings reflect and complement themes which have emerged periodically in the four main studies (Chapters 2-5).

In presenting these additional largely East Asian studies, I bear in mind that my role is that of a well-disposed outsider, since I cannot claim any prior background or expertise in conducting East Asia research. Accordingly, I should emphasize that none of the studies referred to in the present chapter are intended to constitute an objective and comprehensive account or evaluation of national policies for languages education in any given country. On the contrary, they are simply individual research studies focusing on different areas of East Asia, written by respected researchers and published in international research journals outside the British Council system, which seem to the present writer to have something interesting and relevant to add to what has already been written.

In addition, the small piece which I have written about each research study is not intended to be a representative or balanced summary of what the study says. In fact, my piece may reflect only one aspect in a study which has covered other aspects besides. My reason for including what I have included is that each small piece raises an issue which seems important in considering 'Learning through English' in East Asia. Although in each case the small piece is set in one particular country, the issue which it raises almost certainly extends to other if not all East Asian countries.

It should also be borne in mind that the British Council has already supported a series of excellent research studies on aspects of bilingual education in East Asia, e.g. Bax (2009), Coleman (2009) and Clegg (2007). I have not discussed these studies in the present concluding chapter, partly because in the country reports (Chapters 2-5) my colleagues have already referred to them, but also partly because my intention in the present chapter is to present a perspective which complements rather than subsumes these extensive and valuable reports which have already been written for the British Council.

English and societal equity?

A thought-provoking discussion of this issue, drawing on evidence from Indonesia, is offered by Lamb and Coleman (2008). They claim that English is being '*propagated by the government, demanded by employers, broadcast by the media, imposed by schools, and encouraged by parents*', but they claim that '*its value in the mindset of Indonesians goes far beyond its actual practical value in daily life*' (p189). Their evidence is based on two studies in Sumatra. There, they claim to discern an unequal distribution of what they term cultural, social and economic capital. Their first study claims that access to English is not evenly distributed; their second study claims that even in sectors where there is some privilege, learners still have to take their own steps to acquire literacy in English, mainly in the form of tuition outside of school. The writers' concern is that, unless something positive is done, then the spread of English may exacerbate rather than redress the inequity of the situation, and they surmise that English may in fact be becoming '*a luxury product, sold by high-street language schools and profit-making publishing companies*'.

English and 'obsessive paranoia'?

In Taiwan the two most recent dominant prestige languages have come from outside: first Japanese through colonisation which was then superseded by Mandarin Chinese brought by the Nationalists in their retreat from mainland China. These dominated the Southern Min, Hakka and Austronesian languages which were already spoken there. With globalisation and increasing democracy, English assumed an ever greater role. In her thought-provoking analysis of language policy issues affecting Taiwan, Wei (2006) claims that the interest in acquiring English there has become fiercely competitive. She claims that one reason for favouring the use of English has been to avoid situations of conflict between the use of Mandarin and the longer-established languages of Taiwan: '*Given these tense circumstances, English, imbued with the cachet of Western economic*

and technological expertise, has the further advantage of being a 'neutral' medium for inter-ethnic and international communication.' However, she goes on to claim that 'English-language education in Taiwan has been managed with obsessive paranoia, and English proficiency has been deemed a panacea for all educational and professional shortcomings. These attitudes have resulted in the grotesquely disproportionate allocation of time, energy and resources (particularly in metropolitan areas) to the study of English before children have acquired a firm base in their mother tongues' (p93)

English and marginalisation

The study by Tupas (2008) focuses on a marginal fisher-folk community in the Philippines in which there are major social problems such as extreme poverty, unemployment, drug abuse and economic exploitation. Although Tupas accepts that the learning and use of English can empower people, there is unequal access to it and the community *'does not have equal access to the social goods needed to be successful in the first place'* (p234). In such circumstances, it is argued that *'the proposition that English should be the medium of instruction because it is now the language of social mobility and prestige becomes largely ideological posturing'* (p238). Although many of the community were officially judged to be illiterate, this judgement was considered to rest on a flawed view of literacy which in fact is more than accomplishment in reading and writing but should be viewed as a set of social practices developed by a community to suit its particular needs in context. Viewed in this way, the community in fact used their local language with some sophistication, e.g. in respect of symbols, metaphors and word-coinage. On Tupas' argument, therefore, valuation of a community's local language should be a basis for incorporating additional languages, yet it was feared that, however well-intentioned the national bilingual education policy might be, it may have the effect of *'marginalising the various local cultures of multilingual communities'* (p236).

English and language-shift in the home

In a compelling analysis of bilingual education policy in Singapore. Dixon (2005) indicates that the policy has had highly successful outcomes. These include: increasing levels of achievement in a range of academic subjects, and highly successful standing in international research comparisons of achievement in mathematics and science, examined through the medium of English. In fact, such has been the success of the policy that Dixon surmises that *'Singapore's success in educating students through a second language challenges the assumption of supremacy of instruction through the home language.....'* (p25).

However, success did not come immediately. It took some years in fact – a point well worthy of note for policy-makers elsewhere who may be looking for short-term solutions and paying insufficient attention to the longer-term. The factors influencing the success of the policy must be many and complex, and it is not the purpose of the present text to identify and discuss them.

There is however one remarkable factor to which I should like to draw attention.

According to Dixon, this consisted of: in the case of homes of Chinese background, some parents shifting language-use in the home from Chinese dialects (presumably such as Cantonese and Hakka) to Mandarin; and in the case of homes of other backgrounds, some parents shifting towards the home-use of English. Thus, English as major international language, and Mandarin as major regional (East Asian) language, complemented Malay as national language and would be learned not only through bilingual education at school but would be further promoted by parents using these languages at home with their children.

As Dixon says, many Singapore parents taught themselves Mandarin or English and *'probably chose to do so from a belief that speaking the language(s) of school at home would help their children succeed in Singapore's competitive school system and bring economic benefits in the form of higher-paying jobs'* (p43).

Of course, not all parents chose to shift their home language in the way described above, and still a wide range of languages are spoken at home. Dixon suggests that this might help explain one area of weakness in the outcomes of the bilingual education policy thus far: an ethnic gap in achievement, and surmises that if ways could be found of harnessing these languages more fully in the education system and thereby helping students make stronger connections between their home & community and their experience at school, then an already impressive system might achieve even more.

Majority/minority issues

Factors restricting progress

The linguistic situation of China's fifty-five ethnic minorities, embracing over 100 million persons, is the focus of a study by Yang (2005). In the big cities and coastal areas, the ELT industry is stated as being bigger and more rapidly developed than in the largely rural inland areas where many ethnic minorities live. Yang claims that a number of factors have had a negative impact on the development of ELT in these areas, causing the ELT industry there almost to stagnate. Among the main factors are; lack of funding; low perceived value of English (with greater interest in learning Chinese); Chinese minority-language education at school which leaves little room for learning English; the challenge of learning English which for the ethnic minorities might seem geographically, psychologically and linguistically remote; very limited exposure to English outside the classroom, with the consequence that it is not seen as relevant to everyday life; low availability of English-language newspapers or books; severe shortage of qualified English teachers. With regard to teachers, Yang states that quite often they are community-sponsored and may only have been educated up to the end of secondary school, with no professional training, hence their proficiency in English may be limited. With regard to textbooks, Yang claims that these are written mainly for the Han ethnic majority and are not particularly adapted to the needs and cultures of the ethnic minorities.

At the same time, Yang seems quite optimistic that more minority ethnic students will progress in English, if more national attention and support can be provided.

Different models of bilingual education for the majority and the minorities

The fascinating paper by Feng (2002) is also based on bilingual education in China and has a 'major' and a 'minor' theme. The 'major' theme refers to the learning of English by the Han ethnic majority (who comprise over 90% of the Chinese population). In many cases, they are likely to have Mandarin as national and first language, with English as the first additional language they are learning. The 'minor' theme refers to China's ethnic and linguistic minorities. They are likely to have a minority language as their first language and to be learning Mandarin at school as their first additional language, and possibly to be confronting English as their next-in-line language for learning.

With regard to the 'majority' population, Feng reports that there have been several initiatives already in bilingual education, with Shanghai alone, for example, providing this in 260 primary and secondary schools and with approximately 45,000 students involved. English is reported as being used for subjects such as science, mathematics, music, arts & crafts and PE, with generally parents and the media very keen on the idea. Schools adopted a range of models, ranging from total immersion taught by native speakers to much more limited forms of provision. However, at nursery level early total immersion was banned or discouraged, and a favoured model was early partial immersion.

One particular study is reported (Qiang & Zhao, 2000) involving eight nurseries and five primary schools in Xi'an, amounting to fifteen hours per week of teaching through the medium of English. The children in the experimental (immersion) group were reported as being not only more proficient than the non-immersion control group in respect of their command of English but also to show more creative thinking and more cognitive and affective development.

The move towards proficiency in English was also being supported at tertiary level, with administrations such as in Guangdong province beginning to require all subject teachers under a particular age to achieve a given level of English proficiency.

Feng sees this move towards English by the majority population as reflecting the policy concept of *Zhuanye Waiyu Fuhexing Rencai* (Talents with integrated skills in their specialisation and a foreign language).

A different concept, on the other hand, is seen as reflecting provision for the minorities. This is *Min-Han Jiantong* which signifies mastery of the home language and Chinese. Although on the face of it, this may seem entirely reasonable and indeed desirable, in that it allows an acknowledged position for the home language, Feng's insightful article points to some potential difficulties with the concept. For example, he claims that this represents a rather idealized notion, in that it assumes that bilinguals will be equally competent in both languages across all situations, whereas

in fact *'this concept of idealized bilinguals has been challenged internationally rarely can any bilingual be equally competent across all situations'* (pp351/2). In addition, minority children may suffer from 'cultural discontinuities' and may have a fear of being able to learn Mandarin Chinese successfully, particularly as textbooks in standard Chinese are considered to be based largely on Han culture. As a consequence, a feeling can build up of minority children becoming labelled as slow learners. It is important therefore to get beyond any perception that minority groups are primitive, intellectually under-developed and economically dependent, because this can reflect or lead to exclusionist or assimilationist policies. What is needed is a move from a superior-inferior mentality to collaborative power relationships with the majority through the school system. Feng argues that *'..... stakeholders of education join forces and take initiatives to develop minority education programmes that value children's linguistic and cultural capital and help empower them while addressing the social and political context of the country'* (p544).

From assimilationism towards making hard choices

The issue of local languages is further developed in a highly thoughtful paper by Kosonen (2008), this time in respect of Thailand. Kosonen argues that literacy in a local language plays a vital role in the maintenance and revitalisation of that language and its associated culture(s), a finding widely endorsed elsewhere in the world. However, literacy in local languages nowadays has to face up to literacy in other languages at the global level (especially English), the regional level (e.g. Mandarin Chinese) and the national level (in this case, Standard Thai).

Fortunately, an important development in national policy thinking seems to be taking place: *'In the globalised world, it is no longer possible to implement strong assimilationist literacy and educational policies. Moreover, such policies do not seem to reach the intended goals of national unity and equal opportunities for all. Generally, Thailand seems to be moving towards multiple literacies in multiple languages. This also means a change from assimilationist to more integrative policies, and the emerging acceptance of the cultural and linguistic diversity in Thai society'* (p184).

This change of perception seems to constitute a welcome pre-condition for the survival of the local alongside the global, the regional and the national. Kosonen claims indeed that until recently local languages tended to be supported mainly by civil society, but that the state is playing an increasing role – in principle, a development to be welcomed. However, there are still tensions which are difficult to resolve: *'Many minority language speakers have to consider different literacies and their value not only as a resource in socio-economic development, but also as resistance to globalisation, regionalisation and nationalism. In other words, some members of minority language communities feel they have to make hard choices between the maintenance of their cultural and linguistic heritage (i.e. local literacy) versus upward mobility in the society (i.e. standard Thai literacy) ... They have to decide for themselves on the balance of various languages in their linguistic repertoire, and make the best possible use of their linguistic capital'* (p185).

Curriculum and pedagogy

Does early immersion in an additional language cause disadvantage to the development of a child's first language and sense of national identity?

This question is of major concern to many parents and teachers, and particularly so perhaps in areas of East Asia. In Japan for example I have encountered this concern as expressed not only by parents and teachers but also by distinguished academics. Their concern rests on an assumption that it may be best during the first (say) seven years of a child's life to concentrate on the first language and sense of national & local identity, and once these are securely established to use them as a good basis for learning additional languages and gaining experience of other cultures.

On this theme there is an interesting study by Downes (2000) based on early immersion in English in a Japanese elementary school. It should be admitted straightaway that this was a private school and so there is no claim that the outcomes would be generalizable to the non-private sector. The school offered parents the choice of a monolingual or bilingual track. Parents choosing the monolingual track had expressed concerns about the possibly detrimental effects of the bilingual track, if chosen, on their child's cultural identity. An attitude questionnaire was developed which was administered to the children on the bilingual track in grades 5, 6 and 7 and to children receiving a monolingual education in Japanese in three other schools which were matched in academic achievement and socio-economic status. The children taking the bilingual education track were found to be more flexible in their cross-cultural attitudes and also to show a stronger sense of Japanese cultural identity than the monolingually-educated comparison groups. In other words, far from undermining the children's Japanese cultural identity, their bilingual education was enhancing it. It is not difficult to see how this may have come about. By experiencing another culture or cultures through a different language, the children were gaining a greater understanding of themselves, of what was common across cultures and of what was uniquely Japanese. Children being educated monolingually would not enjoy that opportunity to the same extent.

Downes provides an interesting discussion of the psychological background to this issue. The parents had been concerned that maybe a bilingual education would cause confusion in their child's mind, but in fact no evidence was found of the phenomenon of 'anomie' which may be understood as a mental state of confusion and dysfunctional conflict. It is argued in conclusion that a way needs to be found of resolving the tension between the Japanese concept of *nihonsiron* which emphasizes Japan as a unique, homogeneous and perhaps superior society and the concept of educational internationalization.

Does early reading in EFL have a negative impact on first-language reading (character recognition)?

Behind this question lies a concern that is very similar to the one discussed in Downes (above). The concern is: If children from an early age are educated in part through an additional language (in this case, English), will this have a negative effect on the development of their first-language

literacy? An excellent, detailed study in China (Knell et al, 2007) offers valuable insight into this vital area. In their study, they were able to compare an early partial immersion (EPI) group with a comparison group that was receiving conventional mandarin-language education. The pupils were at Grades 1-3 in a state primary school, with a teacher-pupil ratio of 1-50. The EPI group's education was 50/50 English/Mandarin, with English being used for moral education, art, music, physical education and science, and Mandarin used for Chinese reading and calligraphy, and mathematics.

One of the main questions which the researchers wished to address was whether or not there would be significant differences between the EPI and the comparison group in respect of Chinese character recognition. This was a highly important question to address, since for Chinese children it is vitally important that during their primary schooling they should learn a large number of Chinese characters very well. In the event, no significant differences were found between the two groups of children in their ability to recognize Chinese characters. So, receiving 50% of each week's curriculum through the medium of English had not brought about disadvantage to a basic first-language skill. In addition, and not surprisingly, the EPI group gained significantly higher scores when their English was assessed in respect of word recognition, vocabulary and oral language performance.

Pre-requisites for Content-based Language Teaching

The study of content-based language teaching (CBLT) in three middle schools in Xi'an (China) by Hoare (2010) lends further insight into key factors which need to be put in place if teaching through the medium of an additional language is to prove effective. Although influenced by immersion teaching as developed in Canada, the scale of the CBLT initiative was deliberately modest: teaching one area of content through the medium of English for two lessons per week. Moreover, the subject area could not be part of the formal curriculum, since this was required to be delivered in Mandarin Chinese, and so across the three schools the topics of 'nature and society', 'social studies' and 'science and life' were chosen. The findings suggested that the potential of CBLT was not really being fulfilled, because of a number of constraining factors. For example, the teacher were English-language specialists and *'they often find mastery of the content a particular challenge as the students become more advanced'* (p77). In fact, the teachers did not seem aware of how teaching subject content might contribute to the development of their students' English, and they tended not to see the CBLT lessons as being English lessons. In addition, there was a lack of suitable materials. Hoare concludes that there was a lack of 'content depth' and only limited focus on complex language use, both of which really need to be present if CBLT is to achieve real success. Despite this shortcoming, the approach was seen to have some advantage over the conventional approach based on teaching English as a school subject, in that it provided *'an accessible means of enriching the students' exposure to English and focusing more strongly on communicative aspects of English learning'* (p84).

The needs of limited-English-proficiency CLIL-learners

If learners on a bilingual education or CLIL programme show only limited proficiency in English, then it must become extremely difficult for them to develop complex, cognitively-demanding content knowledge and skills through the medium of that language. An interesting study conducted in Malaysia (Yassin, Marsh, Tek & Ying, 2009) offers insight into this important area. The subject content related to Science and mathematics which had been taught in bilingual education programmes since 2003, beginning with Year 1 at primary school and Form 1 and Lower 6 at secondary, and the researchers report that by 2007 there were 5,421,158 learners involved, so the development was much more than a small-scale pilot and carried major national significance. It was not surprising that sharply contrasting views developed, and in fact the Ministry of Education subsequently decided to discontinue the initiative, though the decision had not been taken by the time the researchers' paper had been written. As part of the argument against the initiative, the researchers mention the study by Ishah (2008) which claimed to have found that 75% of learners did not comprehend or barely comprehended their teaching in English, that 80% or more of teachers used code-switching between English and a national language, and that performance in Science and English was poor; but on the other hand they also refer to other research which showed a more positive picture.

Quite properly, the research team were focused not so much on the big question of whether or not it was advisable to implement large-scale teaching of Mathematics and Science through English; they focused on the more tractable question of identifying the needs of students learning these two subjects in this way.

Their particular study was designed to test out a particular procedure for collecting information on students' attitudes to various aspects of learning Mathematics and Science through English. They collected data from Year 4 pupils in two groups: one was pupils of Limited English Proficiency (LEP) and the other was pupils of Not Limited English Proficiency (NLEP). They provide some interesting thoughts on the difficulty of reaching a robust and consensual understanding of these two terms but understandably for their purposes considered LEPs as scoring Grades C or D in English and A or B in Malay, with NLEPs scoring A or B in English and A or B in Malay. The LEPs were characterised as producing major grammatical errors, incorrect or inappropriate use of vocabulary and clause.

Among the several conclusions which they drew from their findings were that for all pupils but particularly for LEPs *'a non-threatening and conducive English-speaking environment within the school community is crucial in encouraging pupils to use the language. It is a way of helping pupils to overcome psychological barriers to speaking a second language ...'* (p67). They also concluded that it is important to cater for *'..... the need for learner environments to involve pupils in inquiry-based settings rather than transmission modes. This involves a shift of mind-sets of teachers and administrators. Teachers need to gradually accommodate diverse levels of English competency among LEP learners with enough support to ensure their mastery of Science (p67).*

Mixed mode: symptom or disease?

Lu (2002) reports a decision of the Hong Kong administration that, except in special approved circumstances, Cantonese should replace English as the medium of instruction in most secondary schools. English-medium instruction would still be permitted in those schools where staff were able to teach through the medium of that language. The decision had been influenced by an awareness that mixed-mode teaching was taking place, with teachers switching between English and Cantonese on the grounds that the English of neither teachers nor their students seemed adequate for being the sole medium of instruction.

The role of English in Hong Kong is interesting, in that despite many years of British colonial administration, it is not strongly embedded in the everyday lives of the great majority of citizens, yet it is perceived as vital in what Lu describes as the superstructures of society – e.g. government, business and the legislature, in order to maintain Hong Kong's eminence as a dynamic city that is able to maintain its competitive edge in relation to China and internationally.

According to Lu, the decision was regrettable and indeed the term 'linguistic myopia' is used in order to describe what lay behind it. Lu in fact claims that mixed-mode teaching was not the problem and argues that mixed-mode communication is a feature of bi- or multi-lingual societies, so there was nothing necessarily wrong with it, and quotes another researcher Li (1997) '*... the government, by outlawing mixed-mode as the cause of low achievement in language learning has mistaken the symptom for the disease*' (p89).

For my part, I see a major difference between a teacher who is proficient in both English and Cantonese and who uses mixed-mode as a deliberate teaching strategy to help students understand cognitively demanding concepts, and a teacher who is not so proficient in English and who uses mixed-mode because he or she is not fully able, or sufficiently confident, to articulate such concepts in English. A student's learning of mathematics, science or other important subjects is vitally important to them, their parents and their society, and these subjects should not be taught in English by teachers who lack confidence or proficiency in that language.

Lu however has some further insightful observations to offer, claiming that the administration's restrictive policy on English-medium teaching may be denying the majority of non-elite students access to English-medium education, making this form of education more accessible to those who are financially privileged, and also that the decision may have served to implicitly downgrade Chinese-medium education '*... Thus Chinese-medium education has been downgraded to second-class education in the minds of people*' (p10).

The same theme is also taken up by Evans (2008) who claims that '*The new ... policy is widely regarded as one of the postcolonial government's most serious policy mistakes because, by limiting most students' access to valuable linguistic capital and thereby potentially restricting opportunities for educational and professional advancement, it is a powerful means of structuring inequality in society ...*' (p486). Evans' excellent article reports on an empirical study designed to ascertain whether mixed-mode was still being implemented in English-medium schools, despite

the government's stated wish that they should implement full immersion in English. It was found that more English was now being used than had been the case before the new policy, during what Evans calls the era of mass English-medium education. However, the level of English used still fell short of the full immersion intended by the policy-makers. It was concluded that '*content teachers have made a commendable effort – in the face of great difficulties – to implement the MOI policy in their classrooms*' (p495). Like Lu (above), Evans takes a pragmatic view: '*Recognising that English-only instruction impedes effective learning and interaction, many teachers understandably – and rightly – switch to Cantonese for particular purposes, such as to explain complex concepts, motivate students and humanise the affective atmosphere in the classroom (They) regard code-switching as a valuable communicative and pedagogic resource*' (p495).

The issue of code-switching is by no means restricted to East Asia. In a study of CLIL in three Swiss primary schools, Serra (2007) was interested in the use of L1/L2 alternation as a metalinguistic device which might facilitate the processing of subject content. The pupils were German-speaking and receiving 50% of their curriculum, especially mathematics, through the medium of Italian or Romansh (two of the other languages of Switzerland). It was found that re-phrasings between the CLIL language and German did not seem to interfere with learning, and the children's development of mathematics proceeded at the same pace and produced results which did not suffer in comparison with those in monolingual classes.

FACTORS WHICH EMERGE

In Chapter 1 there was discussion of policy-related factors illustrated by reference to the national Bilingual Education Project in Spain. It is time to re-visit this area, but now in respect of what seems to emerge from the four main East Asian studies (Chapters 2-5) and those other East Asian studies discussed in the present chapter.

Four sets of factor are now presented: societal, provision, process and now also individual.

In each case, a factor is first identified and then is briefly illustrated by examples which are quoted or at least implied in the texts. It is not my purpose to use this system of actors in order to do a policy profile for each country – to attempt this would be grossly presumptuous. Rather than attempting individual country profiles, I present the factors and their exemplifications as arising from the east Asian texts as a whole.

Societal factors

1. The challenges of the global world

Examples quoted or implied in the texts include: Participation in ASEAN community; perceived societal need to prepare for globalisation; links to foreign Higher Education institutions, generating opportunities for collaboration but also possibly over-westernisation; need to reduce

gaps between rich and poor, and between cities and rural areas; unequal distribution of cultural, social & economic capital; unequal access to English; English as 'luxury product'; tensions between different language-groups; marginalisation of minorities; 'obsessive paranoia' for English; mismatch between publicised case for English and the actual extent of its use in everyday lives; levels of illiteracy, and diverse interpretations of what literacy is in the modern age; shift to use of English in the home; availability of English-language books, newspapers, magazines; 'cultural discontinuities experienced by minorities in face of majority norms and expectations; growing awareness of societal needs for language at different levels: global (e.g. English), regional (e.g. Mandarin, national (e.g. national language) and local (e.g. local language or dialect).

2. Maintenance and revitalisation of national and local cultures

Examples quoted or implied in the texts include: possible threat to cultural values; need to retain national and local cultures; catering for range of ethnicities; possibility of language death; presence of foreign institutions and businesses; longstanding nature of East Asian cultures, extent to which these favour the collective, the conservative, the acquisition of knowledge, reliance on authoritative texts, maintenance of family values ... ; changing nature of East Asian cultures: In what ways are they changing? In what ways do Education and English support desirable change?

3. Extent of English in national society

Examples quoted or implied in the texts include: amount of exposure to and use of English in everyday society outside schools (this varies considerably across the range of East Asian countries which feature in the present text); numbers of students and staff in Higher Education who are able/unable to use English for learning or communication

Provision factors

1. Provision of planned, well-grounded, budgeted and sustainable policy

In the texts these tended to be identified as 'needs' or 'desirable features'. Examples quoted or implied in the texts include: need for long-term planning and support to ensure extension to all (less affluent as well as affluent); harmonising of curriculum with examinations, to avoid highly traditional examinations having negative backwash effect on modernising curriculum; Ministries to set clear, rigorous and attainable levels of national achievement; incremental planning for the short-term, medium-term and long-term; provision of an appropriate budget in support of development, maintenance and sustainability of national policy; provision of robust and equitable procedures for acceptance of schools into a bilingual programme.

2. Provision of teacher education, training, continuing development and incentivisation

In the texts these also tended to be identified as 'needs' or 'desirable features' Examples quoted or implied in the texts include: need for increase in quantity and quality of teacher education; practical exemplification, not just theory, e.g. production of demonstration videos; need for helping teachers gain greater proficiency in English; provision of incentives for teachers, e.g. work experience abroad; opportunity to act as mentors; help for teachers in writing lesson-plans, designing and evaluating curricula; development of a pedagogy that is grounded in real-life examples which expose learners to real-life issues and dilemmas, preparation for dealing with complexities of global life; provision of an appropriate environment in which teachers develop confidence, self-respect, higher morale and open attitudes; need for courses on how to teach complex, cognitively demanding content in the additional language.

3. Provision for Parents

Examples quoted or implied in the texts include: ensuring that parents are consulted and kept well-informed ; need to overcome parental ignorance and resistance

4. Provision of Management Structures

Examples quoted or implied in the texts include: Importance of school boards to gain support and input from parents, teachers, community, businesses etc

5. Provision of collaboration

Examples quoted or implied in the texts include: development of collaborative networks with institutions and groups elsewhere, including in other countries

6. Provision of research

Examples quoted or implied in the texts include: need for policy-related research on inputs, processes, individuals-groups and outcomes; high-quality research-based information on a) an early start, b) when to introduce reading and writing, and c) the benefits or otherwise of early L2 on L1; need research on extent to which native-speakers of English are necessary and what their roles might be; need for research on limited-proficiency learners, e.g. on their understanding, to help them rise to 'breakthrough' level so as to gain the real benefits of bilingual education; need to learn what the different models of language education can reasonably be expected to deliver; need to investigate extent to which complex, cognitively demanding content is really internalised by learners through their additional language; need for information on what is meant by proficiency, by cultural competence and by soft-skills for further HE and workplace; need more research-based information on how best to integrate content, language, culture learning and use.

7. Provision of Information and publicity

Examples quoted or implied in the texts include: need to cultivate the media, with proper information, to showcase examples of good practice and to highlight well-known 'language ambassadors'; need to deal with people's real questions and concerns; some of the media material contains serious misunderstandings, so need to find constructive ways of correcting this.

Process factors

1. Use of first and additional languages in teaching and learning

Implications arising from the text were: extent to which teaching & learning should be essentially monolingual in the additional language or should allow for mixed-mode, allowing switch to & fro between first and additional language; specific functions which might be fulfilled in the first language; extent to which learners may use their first language, if this is a minority local language and not their national language or English

2. Taking account of learners

Implications arising from the texts included: development of a learner-centred approach with project-work, self-study, reflection, critical thinking, confidence, leadership; support for learners with lower proficiency in English, to help them rise to 'breakthrough' level which enables them to gain most benefit from their bi- or multilingual education

3. Bi- multi-literacy

Implications arising from the texts included: developing integrative language education strategies which help young learners to read and write in two languages, rather than treating the two literacies as being completely separate and potentially threatening to each other; encouraging the development of critical literacy, e.g. detecting implicit, disguised, subjective, cultural, political meanings in words, phrases and discourses; encouraging new ways of reading, writing and other forms of visual & sound expression through the use of information & communications technology, e.g. in links with students in other places.

4. Overcoming mismatches

Implications arising from the texts included: need to find ways of overcoming mismatches, e.g. mismatches between the nature & intentions of programmes and the understandings of these held by teachers and students; programs; and mismatches the demands which programmes make and the capacity of teachers to meet these demands.

5. Collaboration across schools within and between countries.

Implications arising from the texts included: need to develop intercultural and other strategies for making such collaborations work effectively

6. Consultation, discussion and negotiation

Implications arising from the texts included: importance of school boards, important of developing processes which allow them to work well

Individual or small-group factors

1. Individual differences and catering for them

Implications arising from the texts included: ability, L1, ethnicity, gender, socio-economic, geographical, motivation, sense of identity, religious outlook, peer-group influences

POLICIES, CHALLENGES & PROSPECTS

In reflecting on the four countries which have featured prominently in the present study, one may accept that they share certain common cultural traditions and characteristics, and that they also share certain common challenges such as reducing the gap between the rich and the poor and extending the learning and use of English across their populations, and one may also accept that through ASEAN they are creating exciting new commonalities.

At the same time, though, there are major differences between them, e.g. in respect of:

- their amount of exposure to, and everyday use of, English in each particular country
- their number and variety of local languages and dialects spoken
- their range of ethnicities, religions and political ideologies & affiliations
- their size and geographical distribution of population
- their respective financial stability & power, and
- their existing levels of implementation of 'Learning through English'.

Furthermore, if one reflects on the factors which have been set out and exemplified in the preceding section, one quickly realizes that there is nothing simple and unambiguous about them. Each one is in fact complex and multifaceted. The list simply says they are factors and gives examples but does not tell us whether any particular factor operates positively or negatively in any given context. If we consider the factor 'provision for parents', for example, in one context there may be excellent provision for parents (so the factor is positive), but in another context elsewhere there may be no provision at all (so the factor is likely to be negative). The list suggests that 'these are important things to think about' but does not tell us what to do in order to address them and make them as positive as possible.

It is against this background of diversity and uncertainty that the present text reaches its conclusion by briefly discussing nine policy issues which arise from the evidence presented in the various studies. It would be grossly presumptuous to make specific policy recommendations for

each of the countries which have been discussed, so each policy issue is discussed at a certain level of generality rather than in country-specific terms.

Modernisation without sacrificing cultural uniqueness or diversity

It is undoubtedly important to continue the process of adapting East Asian cultures to suit the modern world, but without sacrificing their unique and priceless traditions. This means finding a major place for 'Learning English', 'Learning through English' and 'Using English' and also for the development of vibrant international links and networks, but not at the expense of East Asia's astonishingly diverse linguistic, social, educational and cultural environment. There is no easy way of achieving this, partly because different individuals and groups may have legitimately differing ideas on what the balance should be between modernisation and tradition and between globalisation, regionalisation, nationalism and localisation.

Equity & Inclusion

It is right that there should be equitable and inclusive 'Learning through English' provision for groups in rural areas (as well as in cities), for ethnic, cultural and linguistic minorities (as well as for the majority), for those with low socio-economic status (as well as for the more affluent), and for those with relatively low abilities and proficiency (as well as for those with higher abilities and proficiency). To achieve this will be a large and long-term task requiring a clear vision and considerable determination and resourcing.

Long-term planning for sustainability

The scale of the challenge of implementing an increasingly equitable and inclusive 'Learning through English' policy is so great that it can only be met, if ever at all, in the long-term. The evidence suggests that there are no short-term solutions. Therefore, long-term planning seems essential, with budgets shaped accordingly. Fortunately, without naming any countries, our main studies already show some outstanding examples of long-term planning. Linked to the notion of 'long-term' is the notion of 'sustainability', so that things continue to work well, even when initial support-funding for piloting new initiatives and for helping teachers and managers to develop new knowledge and skills is no longer available to the same extent. We live in difficult financial times, and English-language education cannot expect privileged funding forever. Policy-makers have other priorities too. I can think of two important and innovative bilingual education projects elsewhere, i.e. not in East Asia, which were evaluated as being highly successful but which no longer exist, because the pump-priming funding ran out and the political masters had moved on to different funding priorities in other areas of the school curriculum.

Teacher supply, training and professional development

The evidence is very clear that if 'Learning through English' is to expand and be successful, then this will require an adequate and continuing supply of teachers who have received a good training for 'Teaching English' and 'Teaching through English' and who work in conditions which allow them time and support for planning, preparation, monitoring, evaluation and further self-development. The scale of the challenge is so great that a long-term approach will be likely to be needed. It is quite possible that there may be in places a strong demand from parents and other groups in society for more rapid progress in implementing some form of 'Learning through English'. While it is very good if such strong interest is shown, it may in some cases prove inadvisable to give in to such pressure, if this means putting in place prematurely a weak form of provision, with demand in fact outstripping the supply of 'fit for purpose' teachers. However, if such demand is refused, then time would have to be taken to explain why and also to show that there is in fact a major, budgeted plan for meeting the demand but in a phased and controlled way.

Alignment of curriculum and national examinations

The national Bilingual Education Project (BEP) in Spain, which was discussed in Chapter 1, was fortunate in two respects: a special curriculum for bilingual Spanish-English education was collaboratively devised (by teachers and staff from the British Council and Spanish Ministry) and then officially approved by the national authority, and when students reached the age of 16 they were allowed to sit the International GCSE examination. In fact, to the great credit of the IGCSE authorities, they took considerable steps to learn what was involved in the national BEP. In addition, they provided helpful feedback on schools' performance after the first Cohort had taken the examinations and they were willing to put on courses for teachers in approaches to curriculum and assessment. Thus, there was a productive interaction between an official curriculum and an international examining body.

Although there is no suggestion that East Asian countries should copy the Spanish model, it would be fair to say that if there is no alignment of curriculum and national examinations, with in reality the examinations being based on a different ideology and set of values from the curriculum, then schools, students, teachers and parents can find themselves in a difficult situation.

Models of Languages Education at school

In Chapter 1, eight different models of Languages Education at school were briefly set out. These are of course not the only possible models, and 'on the ground' there is in fact enormous variation. Of those listed in Chapter 1, Models 5, 7 and 8 seem particularly useful, given adequate staffing. Model 5 involves the teaching of one or two subjects in whole or in part through the medium of an L2; while Model 7 (partial immersion) and Model 8 (total immersion) increase the amount of L2 and the number of subjects taught through this medium.

In this respect, Canada has been exemplary, in that over a period of 40 years or more it has elaborated a number of different models of Languages Education (particularly models involving some form of immersion) and has accumulated a substantial body of knowledge and experience of what each model consists of (provision factors), how it may appropriately be delivered (process factors) and what outcomes may reasonably be expected of it. This provides evidence-based information that is highly useful for policy-makers, school managers, teachers, parents and students.

It is not suggested that East Asia should copy Canada or any other country. What is suggested, however, is that it might be a good idea to steer a path between two extremes: at the one extreme having one model for the entire country, and at the other extreme allowing or even encouraging schools to develop their own models. In the one case there might be too much uniformity and in the other too much confusion. It may be useful for policy-makers to work towards legitimizing a fairly small number of different models which were devised to suit their own culture and needs, allowing schools to work within a model which suited them and to share experiences with schools which were implementing the same model. This might in fact allow for schools to progress over time from one model to another one that was rather more ambitious, if that is what staff and parents wished.

Feasibility Studies

As has already been argued, any form of bilingual education is a complex business. There are bound to be risks associated with it, in view of a) the difficulty of providing an adequate supply of teachers who are both proficient in the language and competent in teaching through the medium of the language, and b) the many anxieties and misconceptions which exist in the minds of various parents, teachers, high officials, school managers and the media.

At the same time, a good bilingual education (regardless of the particular model which is adopted) has in principle much more to offer than a good monolingual education. One worthwhile way of moving forward is by implementing a series of feasibility Studies.

It has been my privilege to have responsibility for two such Feasibility Studies, one in Italy and the other in Portugal (each sponsored jointly by the respective ministry of Education and the British Council). In each Feasibility Study the Director was supported by two senior colleagues (one a native speaker of English with fluency in the particular national language, and the other a native speaker of the particular national language and fluent in English), and by three researchers from the particular country (all native speakers of the national language and fluent in English).

Each Feasibility Study had some four months in which to complete its task which consisted of interviewing teachers, parents, school managers and regional officials associated with a sample of schools which had been identified as being potentially in a position to undertake an EBE (early bilingual education) programme. The aim was to gauge a) their understandings of what early

bilingual education consisted of, b) their levels of readiness and willingness to participate in a future pilot study.

The Research group then submitted its report to the Feasibility Study Steering Committee which consisted of officials from the Ministry and British Council and representatives of the various regional authorities. The Ministry then drew on the report in order to make recommendations to the minister for taking a decision on whether or not to go ahead. As a result of this process, if an early bilingual education scheme goes ahead, it will do so in a carefully planned and controlled manner, with the capability of schools to deliver the programme carefully assessed and their major needs for support clearly identified.

The progression of Feasibility Study to carefully monitored Pilot Study to wider implementation is, I believe, worthy of consideration in East Asia. It helps considerably in defining entry criteria which need to be met before a school embarks on this form of education, and it gives teachers valuable experience which they can ultimately pass on to colleagues in other schools.

Internationalisation

Our evidence shows that there are already some impressive examples of East Asian institutions forming productive links with counterpart institutions in other countries, particularly those where English is a first language. Such links will undoubtedly provide a major stimulus for 'Learning through English', and it is not surprising that this seems to be happening at present more in the Higher Education sector than in secondary or primary schools. Yet, if 'Learning through English' is really to take off in schools, then arguably it will be propelled in part at least by similar international links. Such links could be based on collaborative projects of various sorts, bringing valuable new dimensions to the experiences not only of students but also of teachers, parents and local communities.

Clearly, the new technologies would feature strongly and encourage new forms of bi- or multiple literacy and intercultural understanding. The links need not necessarily be with schools in English-speaking countries and may in certain cases be with schools in countries where English is a second or foreign language but where there is a good 'Learning through English' provision.

The prospects here are highly promising, but it would be naïve to assume that making a success of such links would be straightforward. In fact, there is excellent research evidence (e.g. Ware & Kramsch, 2005) which shows that even at university level there can be difficult problems of various sorts (e.g. technological, administrative and intercultural) which need to be overcome if an international collaboration involving the new technologies is to be successful. However, the process of resolving such difficulties, particularly those of an intercultural nature, can bring its own rewards, and overall the benefits are considerable.

Research & Development

Devising a successful and inclusive approach to teaching important subject content through the medium of an additional language raises many problems. It is therefore desirable that through research and development there should be systematic attempts to find evidence-based answers that work in East Asian contexts. Among the key topics for investigation would be some which have been highlighted in the present study, e.g. research and development designed:

- to ensure that a young learner's national identity and first language are enhanced by 'Learning through English' and not compromised
- to find ways of introducing reading and writing in two or more languages at an early point, helping young learners achieve bi- or multi-literacy in which their languages work together rather than interfere with each other. The Council of Europe, in its approach to languages education, favours the principle of '*une compétence plurilingue*' (one plurilingual competence) as opposed to having separate competences for each language. Accordingly, research would explore how this one, more integrative competence might be built up through East Asian classroom processes
- to help students not only to learn difficult subject matter but also develop high-level and in the best sense 'critical' cognitive skills and intercultural competences
- to explore whether or not 'Teaching through English' should be undertaken more or less entirely in English, or whether there is a useful role for learners' national and/or first languages (using a mixed-mode approach as discussed earlier in the present chapter), and if so, for what purposes and to what extent;
- to develop, monitor, evaluate and progressively refine a small number of models of Languages Education which are appropriate to each country's needs, ideally proceeding through the progressive phases of Feasibility Study, Piloting and then planned and controlled wider implementation; and
- to help students, teachers, school managers, parents, national & regional authorities and the wider public gain a clear understanding of what bilingual education is, what its potential advantages are, what particular model of 'Learning through English' is being implemented in each particular school, and what outcomes may reasonably be expected.

Behind a programme of this sort lies one profound and fascinating issue which research can only to some extent help clarify. There is something universal about any individual's language development, whether this is first, second or other language. In other words, to some extent, we all go through the same processes, regardless of which languages we have and where we live, simply because we belong to the human species. At the same time, however, there is something which is strongly cultural and contextual about our language development, and this is as true of East Asia as it is of anywhere else in the world.

It is good, therefore, to end with a final challenge which we will never fully meet: to explore the balance between the universal and the cultural/contextual in language development through schooling. For this, a strong East Asian research capacity will be needed, and this is already well underway, working in collaboration with like-minded researchers elsewhere in the world.

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